

**AN INVESTIGATION OF FACTORS  
INFLUENCING MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT OF  
THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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**AN INVESTIGATION of FACTORS INFLUENCING  
MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT OF THE GUJARATI  
LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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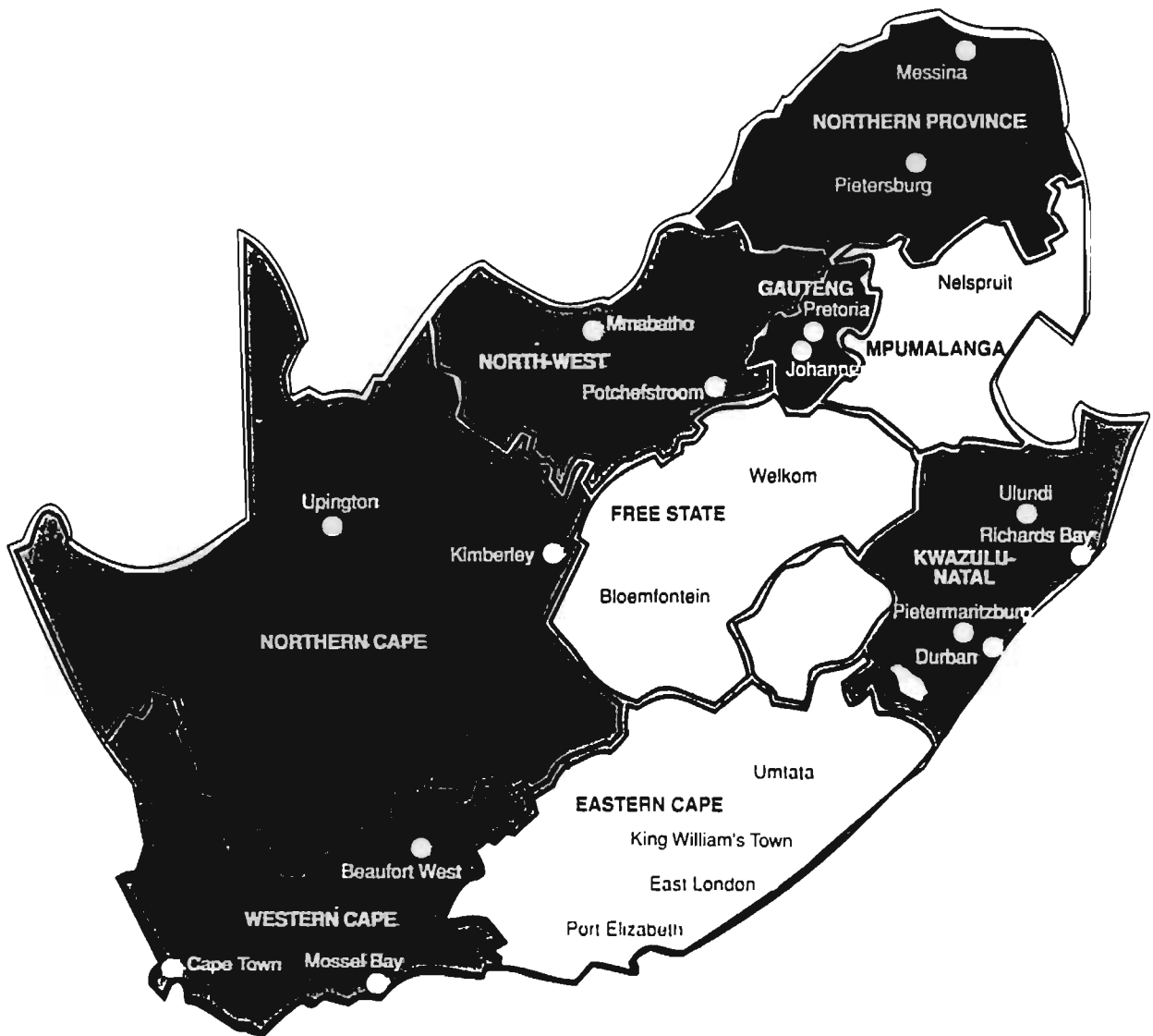
## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

EMT	Ethnic Mother Tongue
GBV	Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya
GEB	Gujarati Education Board
GMA	Gujarati Mahila Mandal
GMS	Gandhi Memorial School
IJSL	International Journal of the Sociology of Language
KHGS	Kathiawad Hindu Gujarati School
KHSS	Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj
LMLS	Language Maintenance and Language Shift
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NGP	Natal Gujarati Parishad
PANSALB	Pan South African Language Board
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAGMP	South African Gujarati Maha Parishad
SBSM	Shree Bharat Sharada Mandir
SHA	Surat Hindu Association
SHES	Surat Hindoo Education Society
SHGS	Surat Hindu Gujarati School
SPA	Surat Prajapati Association
THSS	Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj
TUPS	Transvaal United Patidar Society

# SOUTH AFRICA A RAINBOW COUNTRY

## Provincial Boundries

*Baed on information supplied by Ednut National*



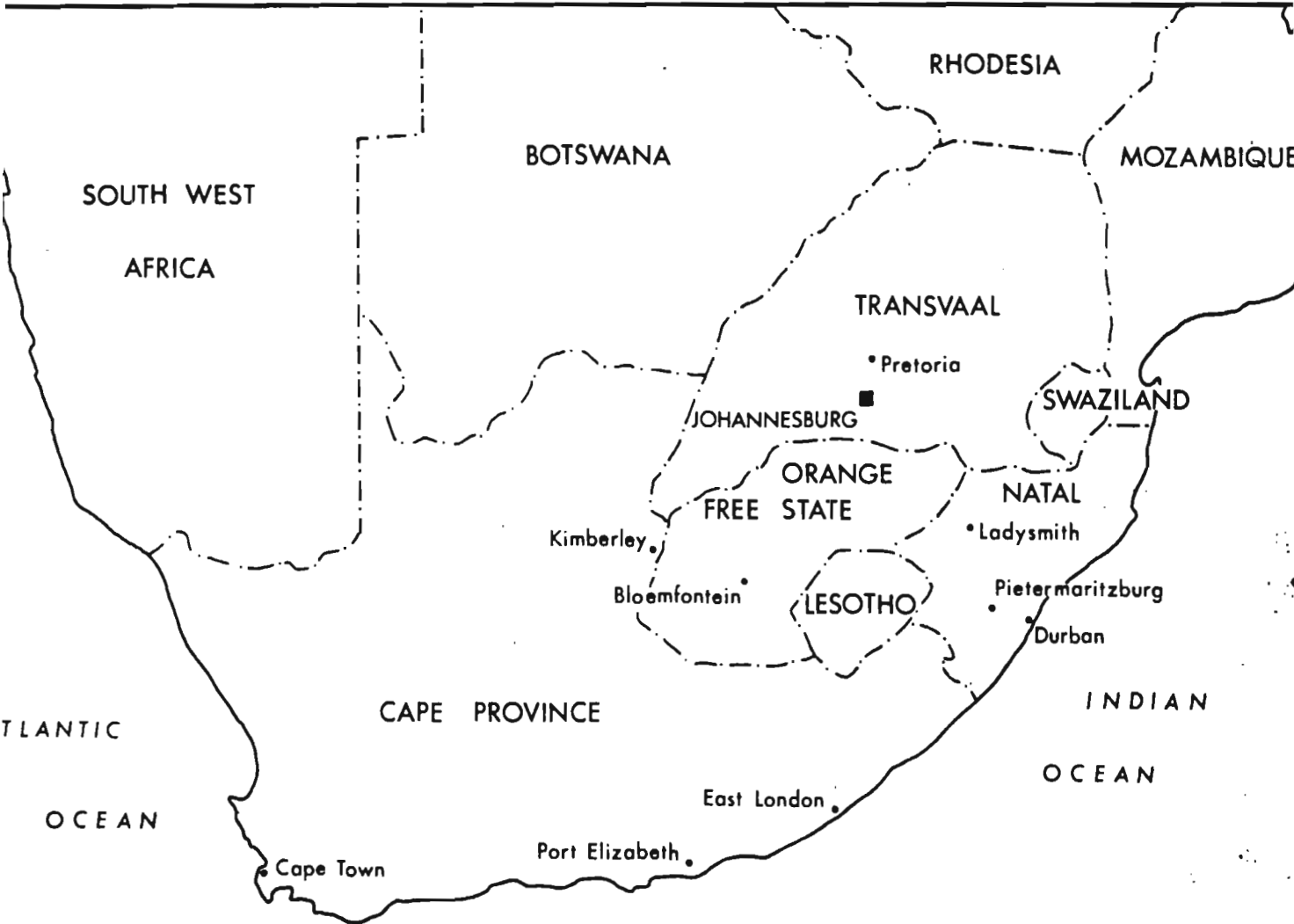
South Africa is a country rich in diversity. Its people and their respective cultures and traditions, and its natural beauty and wild-life constitute a few of the aspects that make up a rainbow country in the true sense of the word.

South Africa's population of some 41 million people is made up of a few remaining members of the San (or Bushmen); of Nguni people, who constitute about two-thirds of the population and speak mainly isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati and isiNdebele; the Sotho-Tswana people, who have among them the South, North and West Sotho (Tswana), each with their own language;

the Tsonga; the Venda; Coloureds; Indians; Afrikaners; English; people who have immigrated to South Africa from the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Italy and many other European countries and who still maintain their own traditions, languages and cultures, as well as the Chinese people, who also maintain a strong cultural identity. The cross-pollination which has taken and is still taking place between the various cultures makes for an even more interesting "rainbow."

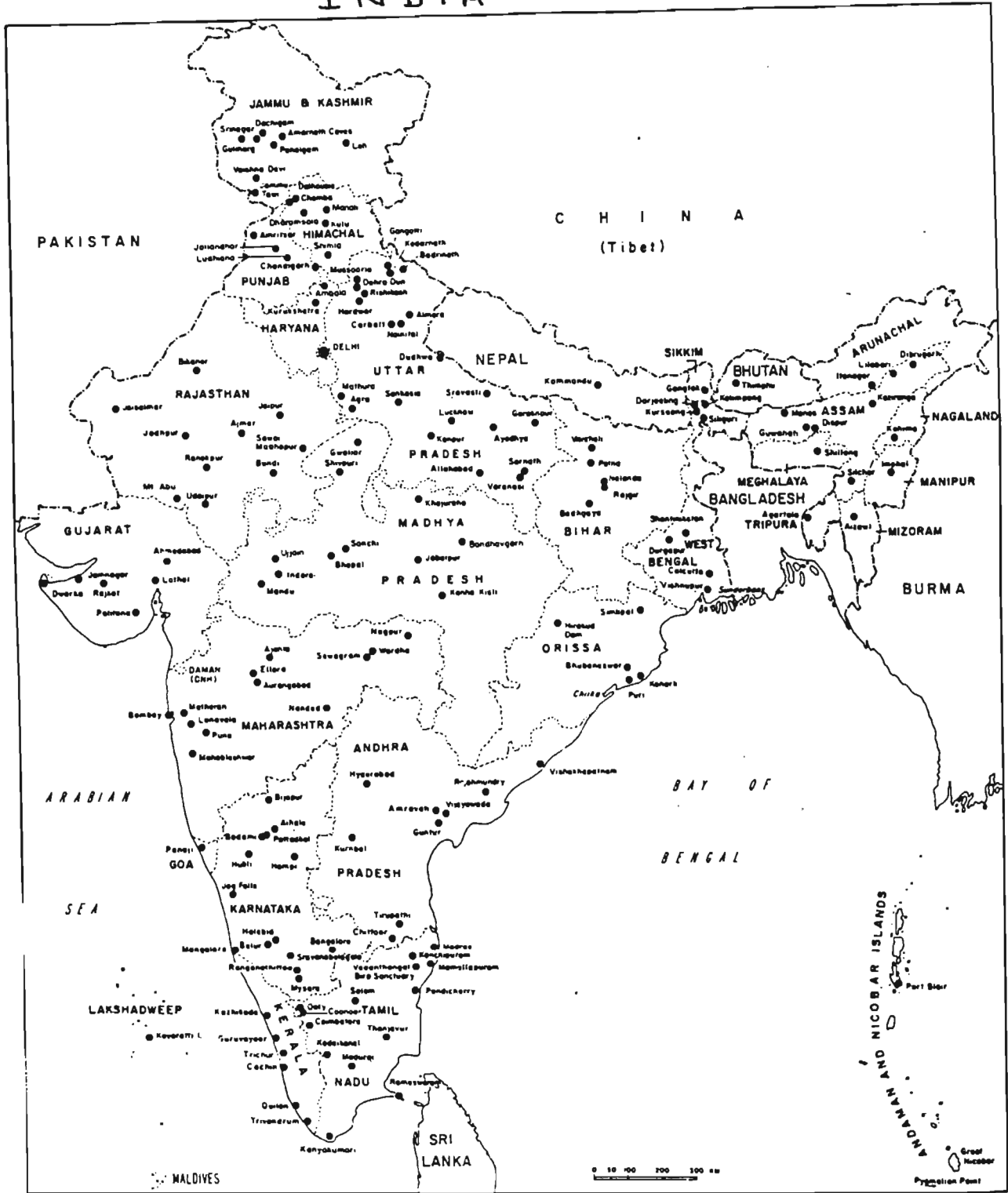
However, it is not only the people who are seen as colourful. The country's nine provinces each feature their own distinctive landscapes, vegetation and climate.

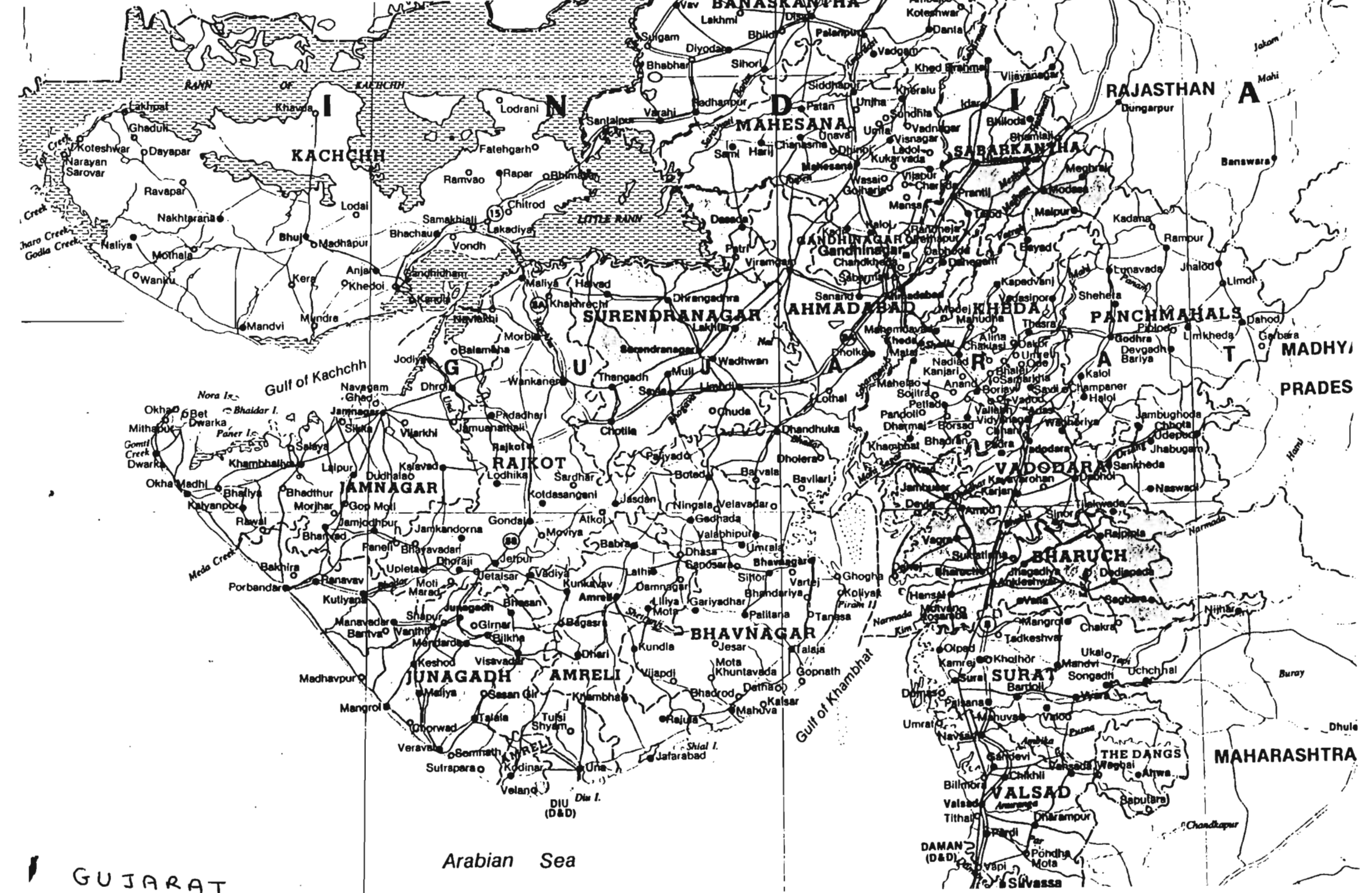
## SOUTHERN AFRICA



BEFORE 1994

# INDIA





## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 MINORITY STATUS OF THE INDIAN POPULATION

In origins the Indians of South Africa are divided into linguistic and religious groups. The Hindus (62.4%) constitute the largest religious group of the Indian population of South Africa. The balance comprise Muslims(18.8%), Christians (12.5) and Others ((6.4%). The figures relate to 1980. Linguistically they constitute Hindi, Gujarati and Urdu speech communities from North India and Tamil and Telugu speech communities from South India. (See Table 1.2 at the end of the chapter and chapter 2 for statistics).

The minority Indian population of approximately 1 million constitute about 3% of the total population of the Republic of South Africa. Within that percentage, the Gujaratis' constitute of 3%, i.e. a minority within a minority. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees and Jains constitute the Gujarati community of South Africa. (Desai:1992)

Klein (1987 : 25), cited by Desai (1992:16) refers to the South African Gujaratis as 'a middleman minority' group. Klein explains that a middleman minority is a minority in a minority group within a society who originate from a land other than their present home, or are descendants of those who migrated. Middleman minorities have strong ethnic ties and concentrate on entrepreneurial business. Klein also refers to them as 'sojourners' who see themselves as temporary migrants who plan to return to their previous homeland to settle.

Although the Indians suffered under the legislations which imposed restrictions on their acquisition and occupation of land they did not desire to return to India. The repatriation scheme of 1914 had failed. When the 'assisted emigration scheme' was introduced in the Cape Town Agreement in 1927, the highest number of Indians that left South Africa was 3477 in 1928 and it reached its low figure of 48 in 1940. By 1961 the government recognised Indians as part of the permanent population of South Africa. (Pachai 1979:39-45).

From 1910-1994 South Africa was politically divided into four provinces, viz. Natal, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Cape Province. The bulk of my research focuses on this period. Therefore, even though since 1994 the country has been politically divided into nine provinces, I will refer to the provincial divisions as obtained before 1994.

## **1.2 REASONS FOR THIS RESEARCH**

(i) There is an absence of academic and scientific research in the sociolinguistic situation of the Gujarati community in South Africa. The scope of Desai's (1992) research had been limited to Natal.

(ii) The researcher is an active member of the Gujarati community who participates in promoting language, culture and religion. This accounts for the keen interest in carrying out this research.

(iii) This study may assist to compare the status of other Indian languages in South Africa.

(iv) This study can also contribute to a wider understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of Indians in the diaspora.



The following working hypothesis was adopted : The Gujarati language has been successfully maintained over a century in South Africa. Stable bilingualism in the Gujarati and the English languages has been maintained from the time the government took full responsibility for the education of the Indians (through the English-medium schools known as 'English Schools') in the 1930's in South Africa. In the same period most of the major Gujarati-medium schools were established by the community. However, in the last decade there seems to be a greater shift to the English language.

The bulk of this research focuses on the sociolinguistic situation of the Gujarati language in South Africa. It is mainly directed to the issues of Ethnic Mother Tongue (EMT) retention and language shift in a minority community.(LMLS)

### **1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The primary aims and objectives of this research are as follows:

- 1 To investigate the current usage and the status of the Gujarati language in South Africa.
- 2 To document the development of education in the Gujarati language which has been the key factor in language maintenance from the time of immigration to the present day.
- 3 To assess and evaluate the present attitudes and expectations and aspirations of the Gujarati speaking community vis-a-vis the Gujarati language.

4 To assess practical difficulties (political, economic and social) encountered by the Gujarati community in the use and propagation of Gujarati as the language of the community.

5 To apply models of Language Maintenance and Language Shift and identify factors that may influence the maintenance and shift of the Gujarati language in South Africa.

6 To identify current challenges and offer recommendations for the maintenance of the Gujarati language.

#### **1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical model of Fishman (1966) as applied by Sridhar (1989) for the study of LMLS seemed relevant for this study in many aspects. Fishman discusses habitual language use of ingroup with intergroup contact - antecedent and concurrent, social and cultural processes and their relation to stability or change in habitual language use, and behaviour towards language in the contact setting, including directed maintenance or shift efforts.

This study falls within the discipline of 'sociolinguistics' and it focuses on Language Maintenance and Language Shift (LMLS) There are some concepts peculiar to the discipline. I have described below few of those relevant to the study as used by J. Fishman (1972), J. Edwards (1985), R. Appel & P. Muysken (1987) K. Sridhar(1989), C. Hoffman (1991) and J.Holmes (1992).

What is the definition of '**sociolinguistics**'? Downes (1994:15) explains, "Sociolinguistics is that branch

of linguistics which studies just those properties of language and languages which require reference to social, including contextual factors in their explanation".

I have often used the term '**vernacular**' for Gujarati and generally the use of the word has not been favoured by Indians since in the colonial era it referred to its 'low' status compared to the 'high status' of the dominant English language. Holmes (1992:80) explains that it basically refers to a language which has not been standardised and which does not have official status. Secondly it refers to the definition as given in the 1951 Unesco report: that it is the first language of a group socially or politically dominated by a group with a different language. Gujarati is standardised and is the official state language of Gujarat, thus, there is no reason to doubt its status. In this study 'vernacular' will refer to the definition given in the Unesco report.

Referring to **Linguistic Minorities** Hoffman (1991:225) describes two types: the first type are those whose language is not the official language of any state, ethnic group and the second type whose languages are official ones elsewhere - communities who are minorities in the state of which they are citizens. The second type is applicable to all the linguistic groups of Indian origin in South Africa including the Gujarati speakers.

Fasold (1984:213) says that **Language Maintenance** occurs when a community collectively decides to continue using the language it has traditionally used. When a community begins to choose a new language in domains formerly reserved for the old one it may be a sign that **Language Shift** is in progress.

Issues concerning **Bilingualism** and **Diglossia** and **Code Switching** which are described as patterns of societal multilingualism and in which functional specialisation of the two languages is determined are discussed in the study.

There is a strong link between **ethnicity and language**. Desai (1992:74) in discussing ethnicity in the Gujarati community cites Fishman (1966:399) who has a deep insight on the subject of language and culture and it seems to ring true of the ethnic communities. Here is the observation:

"In general, ethnicity and culture maintenance appear to be much more stable phenomena than language maintenance. On the one hand, most immigrants become bilingual (i.e. English displaces the hitherto exclusive use of their mother tongue in certain kinds of interactions) much before they embark on de-ethnization or seriously contemplate the possibility of bi-culturism. On the other hand, marginal but yet functional ethnicity lingers on (and is transmitted via English) long after the ethnic mother tongue becomes substantially dormant or is completely lost."

Fishman (1966 : 399)

T.S.Eliot's definition of **culture** embraces language, arts, music, literature, philosophy and religion. Eliot attaches importance to values cherished by a community. (Sharma 1993:2)

**Language Loyalty** can have positive results in the maintenance of the ethnic language. Gumperz (1972:227) says "We speak of language loyalty when a literary

variety acquires prestige as a symbol of a particular nationality group or social movement."

For the purpose of this study it is important to know and understand the socio-historical background of the Gujarati speakers in South Africa. **Chapter 2** introduces the Gujaratis as the *passenger* Indians and their relationship with indentured labourers. Most of the passengers came from the west coast of India. The study examines the circumstances of the arrival of some of the first families of *passengers* and where they settled. A brief account of their previous and present occupations is given. Accounts of many other immigrants are given by Bhana(1990) and Swan (1985). The chapter also describes the sociolinguistic situation in Gujarat and few of the dialects of the Gujarati language which are even used in South Africa.

The reciprocal relationship between culture and language and their place in the community forms the focal point of discussion in **Chapter 3**. Early language practices describe the first generation as being predominantly monolingual Gujaratis but gradual concomitant changes due to political and economic pressures the community becomes bilingual or multilingual. The cultural practices which are peculiar to the community and support the use of the Gujarati language are also described. The societal organisations which form an important network of the community play a significant role in maintaining mother tongue, culture and religion. Their formation and objectives are given.

The factors influencing the maintenance of the Gujarati language in South Africa are described and discussed in **Chapter 4**. The negative effects of the political and economic aspects has also been discussed. A lengthy discussion of the social factors

has clearly illustrated the communities' positive contribution to the maintenance of the language. Community solidarity, ethnic identity, school system, culture, religion and other potential variables are discussed relating to LMLS. Formal Gujarati education in private society organised schools and state schools has been documented in detail, reporting the reasons for success or failure through information elicited from the questionnaires regarding the efforts made by the community and the state.

After over a century and three decades there has been a notable change in the linguistic patterns of the community. These are discussed at length under the headings bilingualism, code switching, language change, generation shift and acculturation in **Chapter 5** adding an important dimension to our understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of the Gujarati community in South Africa.

In **Chapter 6** a brief account of literature in Gujarati written in South Africa has been presented. In spite of the adverse conditions the members of the community did contribute to political, cultural and creative literature. The literature reflects the turbulence and challenges faced by the society.

**Chapter 7** provides the conclusion to the study. Recommendations have been made which may assist the community in their efforts to halt complete language shift.

## **1.5 METHODOLOGY**

This study is based on reports of status and language usage, proficiency, education in the mother tongue, attitudes, interactions among Gujaratis, socio

cultural practices and maintenance efforts of a selected sample of Gujaratis. Detailed information has been elicited on the **use** of ethnic mother tongue in various domains by grandparents, parents and children. Special attention has been paid to the degree of the children's and parents' proficiency in the ethnic mother tongue.

Empirical research was conducted by questionnaires on a random sample basis. An eighty two item questionnaire was administered to 350 members of the Gujarati community in South Africa. Assistant fieldworkers from the community facilitated the distribution of the questionnaires. The questionnaires elicited information on the following categories: (a) personal and demographic details (b) heritage (c) status and use of the language (d) aspirations and attitudes towards the language (e) factors affecting Maintenance and Shift of the Gujarati language.

The questionnaires were distributed (as far as possible) to different geographical areas where the Gujaratis reside; equally to male and female members of the Hindu and Muslim Gujarati-speaking community; to be distributed to five different age groups; the questionnaire could be filled by any member of the family. The distribution should be made among all economic class groups.

The result was that out of 350 questionnaire 189 were returned. The sample covers most of the areas of the Gujarati population which is highly concentrated in the urban and suburban areas. Out of the newly designated nine provinces of the country four - Gauteng, Kwazulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape, were represented in the survey. These areas are in accordance with the lists of Gujaratis compiled by the 'parent' bodies most of which are now published in the form of a directory.

The following table represents the age groups of the respondents. All the groups were fairly well represented except for the youth between 21-30 years.

Chi-square, a non parametric test suitable for nominal data was used to test whether or not the differences observed were statistically significant.

**TABLE 1.1**

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE**

<b>AGE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
21-30	11	5.8
31-40	48	25.5
41-50	57	30.3
51-60	47	25.0
61+	25	13.3
MISSING	1	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	189	100.00

Questionnaires were also distributed to Gujarati schools, teachers and institutions. Information on establishments of the community organisations and schools and details on the number of pupils and syllabi was elicited.

Research was also conducted through analysis of the material and data available from Gujarati Community Organisations and Gujarati Education Societies and Brochures of important Jubilee celebrations of societies. Access to the minutes was possible since the researcher is a management committee member and member of various executive committees of Gujarati institutions in Natal.



Data available from population censuses are used since they are available for the same population for successive censuses. If there is a sufficient decline in the number of respondents reporting a given language (home language) that might indicate a shift. (See Table 1.2).

**TABLE 1.2**

**HOME LANGUAGE - ASIANS**

Question : State which language each person most often speaks at home.

YEAR	GUJARATI	HINDI	TAMIL	TELUGU	URDU	ENGLISH
1980	17 757	14 739	13 020	1 878	7 679	600 565 80%
1991	7 456	4 969	4 103	638	3 760	821 000 95%

[Source : Central Statistical Service 1991]

Other source of information was journals, newspapers and magazines obtained from the University of Natal and University of Durban-Westville; Documentation Centres of the University of Durban-Westville and Department of Arts and Culture; ex-House of Delegates and Central Statistical Services.

Informal interviews were conducted personally with approximately 70 interviewees. Some of them are highly active in language, culture and religious propagation among the Gujaratis. Others are participants in community activities, some are teachers of the

Gujarati language. Most of the interviewees spoke good English but a few of the 1st and 2nd generation preferred to speak in Gujarati. The topics covered during these interviews were immigration, traditional family roles, occupation before and after immigration and involvement in community activities. Linguistic values towards mother tongue, attitudes and opinions and contribution to EMT retention were also covered.

Special formal interviews were conducted by school teachers in a state school in Durban and one in Lenasia near Johannesburg, situated in an area where Gujaratis are concentrated. Twenty seven pupils between the age group of 13-14 years were interviewed. The purpose of this survey was to determine the most frequently used language by each of the three generations (grandparents, parents and pupils) living at home. (See Generation - Chapter 5).

The researcher being a participant-observer in the Gujarati community was able to carry out this survey without any serious obstacles. The actual data was gathered over a period of two years, which included interviews and distribution of questionnaires. For this purpose I had to travel to various provinces.

#### **1.5.1 Problems encountered in the survey**

Two problems were encountered while conducting this survey. The first was that not enough questionnaires were returned from the Muslim Gujarati community of South Africa. Therefore I was unable to calculate how significant the contribution of this group was to the maintenance of the Gujarati language. In spite of this drawback I managed to interview a number of members of the Muslim community which was of great value to this research, and whom I have quoted quite often. Since

most of the interviewees chose to remain anonymous I have indicated them by number(#3).

Secondly I managed to get the results of only one of the schools in which formal interviews with the pupils had been carried out. Unfortunately the results of another school from Lenasia were lost in the post and several attempts to recover them from the post office proved negative. There was little time to repeat the interview since the schools were busy with examinations.

## **1.6 SCOPE**

The speakers of the Gujarati language are distributed all over South Africa. However, the majority of the speakers reside in the four provinces given above. There are some Gujarati speakers in the other provinces also. These could not be identified since it proved difficult to locate them. Amongst the speakers there are members of the Hindu, Muslim, Parsee and Christian faith. Gujarati Muslims due to their large numbers compared to Hindu Gujaratis have also played an important role in the maintenance of the Gujarati language. Nevertheless after the time of partition of India in 1947, Gujarati was discouraged in the Madressas of the Muslims.

Sociolinguistics deals with a large range of topics. Some of these are considered for grouping under micro-sociolinguistics and others under macro-sociolinguistics. It is not possible in one study to include all the sociolinguistic concepts. Therefore for the purpose of this study the focus has been on macro socio-linguistics and in particular Language Maintenance and Language Shift (LMLS).

## CHAPTER 2

### SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE GUJARATIS IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

One cannot write about the background of the *passenger* Gujaratis in South Africa without briefly discussing the circumstances under which the indentured Indians came to Natal in 1860. The latter came to work on the colony's sugarcane plantations on a contract of three years which could be extended to five years and this contract could be renewed upto ten years. They were known as 'girmitiyas' to the Indians because of their terms of agreement. The word has often been used by Gandhi (1950) in his writings. The system of indenture was created mainly in response to the labour crisis experienced in the sugarcane plantations. The presence of indentured Indians offered the *passenger* Indians opportunities for trade in goods which were needed by them. These goods like spices and clothing could be obtained from India.

Bhana (1991:7) writes that these labourers were part of the 1.3 million Indians who migrated as labourers between 1860 to 1911. This was part of Britain's general policy of indenturing Indian labourers (with approval from the Indian Government) to her various colonies where there was a demand for cheap and efficient labour. (cf. other immigrations- Chattopadhyaya (1970:4). The Gujarati traders came about fifteen years later.

The indentured labourers came from districts in the Madras Presidency in South India and from the United Provinces of Agra, Oudh and Bihar in North India. The

people from the south mainly spoke Tamil and Telugu languages while the north Indians spoke Bhojpuri, a variety of the Hindi language. The immigrants had a predominantly rural background and therefore it seems natural that they were recruited to work on the sugarcane fields in Natal. Many came as families and they brought their children with them.

A Protector of Indian immigrants was appointed to supervise their welfare - something that was not carried out by the Natal government until 1872. Maasdorp (1968:4-39), Joshi (1942:45) and Pachai (1979 :3) describe their terms of service which were very harsh. An employee had to obtain a pass from his employer to leave the estate to lodge a complaint; they could not go anywhere without a permit and were bound to live on the estate where they had to perform tasks assigned to them by the master no matter how irksome the tasks may be and lastly they could not withdraw from the contract. There were no means of escaping hardships however intolerable. The resisters to these laws could be imprisoned.

The 'passenger' Indians who followed the indentured labourers to Natal, came at their own expense (they paid for their own passage) as traders. Their ancestors, in their quest for trade, had been to East Africa as far back as 2nd century. (cf. Munshi:1935; Chattopadhyaya:1970; Nowbath: 1960). The passengers came primarily to serve the material needs of their compatriots. Besides many prosperous Gujarati Muslim traders there were also those Hindu and Muslim Gujaratis who had found it extremely difficult to eke out a reasonable living and ventured to come to South Africa. Some of the reasons given for immigration at this time by the interviewees were the drought, plague and poverty in India. Many had to borrow money for the boat trip from India to South Africa.

They came mainly from the north west coast of India - from Kathiawad, Porbandar and Surat - which (after India's independence in 1947 declared an independent state only in 1960) now form part of Gujarat. Others were from Bombay. Nowbath (1960:17) claims that the passenger Indians mostly Gujaratis arrived in this country about 25 years after the indentures labourers. In this survey of 1997, out of a sample of 189 respondents, only 166 were able to give the date of first entry of their ancestors. (see Table 1.1). From this table it can be deduced that most of them came between 1900 to 1920.

The majority of the immigrants were Muslim traders and some were Hindu traders. They settled mainly in the Transvaal while some settled in the Natal and Cape Provinces. In the later years after the departure of Gandhi in 1914, the number of free (passenger) immigrants decreased because of the restrictions imposed on them by the Union Government through the Immigrations Regulation Acts. (See Chattopadhyaya 1970: 114-116,234)

**TABLE 2.1**

**YEAR OF ENTRY OF FIRST ANCESTORS OF  
GUJARATI SPEAKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Before 1900	5.4
1900-1920	50.0
1921-1940	31.9
1941-1960	11.4
1961-1980	nil
1981-1996	1.2

(where n = 189, valid cases 166)

Most of the young men came on their own leaving their wives and children behind in their *gaam* or village in India. Few brought their older sons and persons of similar sub-castes or *gaam* and lived together for economic reasons. They did their own cooking and washing of clothes and utensils. This was enduring hardship because they had rarely done such chores in their villages since they came from a traditional background where women were subservient and did the chores in the house.

## **2.2 OCCUPATION OF THE 'PASSENGER' INDIANS**

Even though amongst the early *passengers* many were traders (mostly Gujarati Muslims) the largest percentage were farmers and artisans (see table 2.2) also confirmed by Bhana and Brain (1990:192). All the other occupations have not been included in the table. When they came to South Africa many worked as semi-skilled and skilled artisans, since they could not afford to buy land and do farming and also because of the several restrictions imposed by the government. DR.PP(#22) reported that his grandfather obtained land on his arrival and did do farming. He used to bring his produce to the city for sale. Later due to some obstacles the family gave up farming and opened a small retail shop in town. Many others also rented premises in the city centre owned small businesses.

Daya (1992:22) found that many worked as carpenters, tailors, and were employed as shop assistants and later went into fruit and vegetable hawking and some packed bananas and vegetables and railed them to customers in the Transvaal and Cape Provinces. Later many immigrants invited their family members to join them and worked as clerks, shop assistants and bookkeepers. Vernacular teachers, Hindu priests and

Muslim imams were intermittently called by the community.

**TABLE 2.2      OCCUPATION OF ANCESTORS**

OCCUPATION	VALID PERCENT IN INDIA	VALID PERCENT IN SOUTH AFRICA
Artisans	37.3	27.5
Farmers	26.1	1.8
Business	13.4	41.3
Service	7.0	4.2
Sales Persons	0.5	13.8

(n= 189) (valid cases 142)

### **2.3 LANGUAGE**

The newcomers spoke mostly the **Gujarati** language though a few who had gone to anglo-vernacular schools spoke a little English.. Many of the (Muslim) interviewees stated that whenever they ordered goods for their small shops the orders were made out in Gujarati to the European wholesalers. He had to get a translator to work out the order.

The Gujarati language falls within the category of the Indo-European Family of Languages and like other modern Indian languages belongs to the Indo-Aryan group. Chattopadhaya (1970:62) cites Naidoo V. S.(1949) in illustrating the number of Hindu and Muslim speakers of Indian languages in the three provinces in South Africa (see Table 2.3). Note that there were greater number of Gujarati Muslims than Gujarati Hindus. The Muslim traders were described as 'Arabs' mainly because of their dressing.



**Table 2.3**

**Indians in South Africa** (The figures relate to 1936)

**A**

<b>Natal</b>	<b>Spoken By:</b>	
<b>Language</b>	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>Muslims</b>
Tamil	69,526	594
Hindi	52,110	3,356
Telugu	22,251	97
Gujarati	2,564	8,553
Urdu	278	11,130
<b>Total</b>	<b>146,729</b>	<b>23,730</b>

**B**

<b>Transvaal</b>	<b>Spoken By:</b>	
<b>Language</b>	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>Muslims</b>
Tamil	3,824	118
Hindi	1,523	611
Telugu	130	78
Gujarati	3,501	9,074
Urdu	31	1,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,009</b>	<b>11,191</b>

**C**

<b>Cape Province</b>	<b>Spoken By:</b>	
<b>Language</b>	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>Muslims</b>
Tamil	1,354	138
Hindi	313	648
Telugu	30	27
Gujarati	991	705
Urdu	23	1,313
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,711</b>	<b>2,831</b>

Chattopadhyaya (1970:62) cites Naidoo V.S.(1949)

It is clear that they were predominant in the Transvaal and the Cape Provinces while the Tamil and Hindi speakers dominated Natal. Though most of the Gujaratis were of Muslim and Hindu faith there were a few families of Zoroastrian (Parsees) and Christian faith. Indians were not allowed to settle in the province of Orange Free State right upto the independence from the white minority in 1994.

#### **2.4 EARLY GUJARATI IMMIGRANTS**

Swan(1985:3) records the first **Muslim** passenger merchant, Abubaker Amod, arrived in Natal in 1875 and was closely followed by Abdulla Hajee Adam who became a founder member of the Natal Indian Congress. Abubaker Amod owned a business house in Calcutta; an agency in Bombay; a company in Durban and branches in the Transvaal. Abdullah Haji Adam and two others were managing partners in the firm of Dada Abdulla and Company.

Gandhi (1950:28) states that when Indian traders in Mauritius heard of the indentured labourers in Natal businessmen like Abubaker Amod decided to establish his firm in Natal. He became very successful in his business and this news quickly reached Porbandar and other towns in Gujarat. Other Muslim traders from Gujarat like the Memons arrived in Natal to engage in business and the Vahoras from Surat also followed the others (cf. Bhana and Brain 1990). Gandhi further comments that the traders needed bookkeepers and therefore Gujarati Hindu 'Mehtas' came from Kathiawad. MR.A.A.(#35) stated that the Muslims were not good at bookkeeping and therefore they invited their 'Munshis' from India who kept their account books up to date and even taught Gujarati to their children.

I have tried to include a few more first generation Gujarati speakers, (which information may not have been officially recorded), who also came in the early years of immigration and settled in Natal, Transvaal or the Cape provinces. They all gave an intriguing account of their situation and experience. An account of some of the early Muslim Gujaratis is recorded by Swan (1985).

A record of the date of arrival and the place of origin from India and occupation of the pioneers of the Gujarati families in South Africa and of their subsequent generations have been researched and documented by various regional societies and caste groups and published in a directory or a brochure form. Some of the notable ones are Pravasi Directory of Shree South African Darjee Gnati Mandal (Johannesburg 1992); Surat Prajapati Association (SPA) - Platinum Jubilee Brochure (Durban 1992); Shree Kshatriya Gujarati Mandal - Souvenir Brochure (Port Elizabeth 1989); Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj (KHSS) - 50th Anniversary Brochure (Durban 1995 and 1956); Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir (SBSM) - 60th Anniversary Brochure (Johannesburg 1996). Other information has been obtained by first hand interviews.

In Natal amongst the **Hindus**, earliest records show that two Saraswat Brahmans came from Porbander, Kathiawad and settled in Tongaat in 1884. Amongst the known Hindu Gujaratis who went from Durban to Transvaal was Karsandas S Garach (KHSS:1995). Coovadia brothers who emigrated from Gujarat in 1889 moved like many others from Natal to Transvaal in 1892.

The first of the **Parsee Gujaratis** (of Zoroastrian faith) to come to Durban and establish himself in the early eighties was Parsee Rustomjee. He also had investments in the Transvaal. The Parsee families have gone into the insurance business and many have opted

for high ranking professions as doctors and attorneys and a few into high government office. Frene Ginwala is the speaker of the house in the parliament and her sister Dr.K.Ginwala has been appointed as an ambassador to Italy.

Mr.Motilal Madhavji Divan came to Natal from Porbandar about 1894/95. One of the serious problems the Hindu community faced at that time was the non existence of a crematorium. Mr. Divan had a hearse made for the transport of the dead and in 1904 established the Hindu Crematorium.(KHSS:1956)

Thakersi Damodar came from Gondal in Saurashtra in about 1895 when there were no restrictions on immigration. Shortly after he arrived he established a business in Umgeni Road, Durban. He helped new comers to a strange land and extended his hospitality to them until they settled down.

After spending some time in Transvaal Abhechand Amritlal Gandhi came to Natal in 1896 and settled in Tongaat. He was a highly respected businessman and because of his skill in many facets of life numerous people consulted him to solve their problems. Among his benefactions were the Tongaat High School and Vishwaroop Temple.(KHSS:1956)

Mr. Purshottamdas Girdhardas Desai was one of the few educated men who came from Porbandar in 1904. He started a business career in Tongaat but being a literary man he contributed to the 'Indian Opinion' and later became involved in editing the Gujarati section of the paper. He joined Mahatma Gandhi at the Phoenix settlement and even went to prison for the cause of the passive resistance movement. He wrote two books, one on *Gita* and the other on *Gandhi* which were published in Bombay in 1918. He corresponded with Mahatma Gandhi and is said to have had five hundred

letters written by Gandhi on the subjects of life, religion and politics.

In 1896 Naran Bhagwan came to Durban from Kadod district of Surat and worked as a cook for Mohammed Ebrahim. In 1918 Mr. Mohammed gave him a small fruit shop where he started business in the Point area. Later he opened an eating house in Southampton Street and with the help of his son did very good business with the harbour labourers. His son, Dayal, took over his father's business and was well established with his children when in the 1949 riots he was looted of all his belongings. He started all over again. This was the type of perseverance which made the Gujaratis survive in harsh conditions. (SPA: 1992:82)

Bhana Parsotam came from Kadod in 1893 and started a cafe business in Pine Street, Durban. Later he settled in his property at Tollgate (the present site of the entire Westridge Park) and had a general dealer business there. At the back was a refuge for the early Gujarati settlers from India. He was the founder member of the Surat Hindu Association in 1907. (SPA: 1992:82)

Parag Daya worked on a construction of railway line between Mombasa and Nairobi in East Africa before he came to Durban in 1905. He was a fruit and vegetable hawker. In 1921 he became a partner in Parbhoo Narsi & Co. and was in business upto 1955.

The restrictive immigration law of each province was one of the reasons why there were fewer *passenger* Indians (i.e. Gujarati speakers) than the indentured labourers in South Africa. The passenger Indians only started making their appearance after the eighties. Natal in 1897 passed the Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act. These restrictive acts received attention from M K Gandhi the lawyer who



entered Natal in 1893. As a result the Indian traders' case was publicised through the 'Indian Opinion' a weekly started by Gandhi in 1903. In consequence in 1909 the Natal government amended the 1897 Act to allow appeals to the Supreme Court.

Of the few **Christian Gujarati** families that came to South Africa, the Makan family which came in 1901, is well known in Durban. The Bhikha Makan, Pooja Babhai and Lala Babhai families settled in Durban. The Narsi Babhai and Hara Dana families settled in Port Elizabeth. They belonged to the Methodist church. The interviewee, who served as a Gujarati school teacher in Durban, belonged to the Catholic church. They came from the town of Anand in Charotar district of Gujarat. Most of them attended convent schools where they were taught in the Gujarati medium and English was taught as a subject. Their culture and traditions are of Gujarat. Both the daughters-in-law of the Durban families taught at the local Gujarati school for over twenty years. They still write in Gujarati to their families in India. They had a furniture business in town and few of the members were vegetable hawkers.

The Gujaratis kept close links with their mother country and this was one of the factors which played an important role in the maintenance of the Gujarati language. (cf. Demos 1988:64) As an illustrative case, one may note:- Ravjee Pema, a Hindu Gujarati and Prajapati by caste, made upto 14 trips between India and South Africa. He came to South Africa in 1905 and was a fruit and vegetable hawker by trade. Almost half a century later in 1953 he went back to India permanently. His wife who came to South Africa only in 1933 stayed here only for three years. His two sons born in India came to South Africa and the family has developed to fourth and fifth generation South Africans. (SPA: 1992:82)

M A Mehtar "Farooqi" (a prominent Gujarati poet in Durban) and Yacoob Mehtar's grandfather came to Durban in 1888 from a village called Tatkeshwar near Surat. They call themselves 'Surti Musalman'. They even read the Koran in Gujarati which was later given to Gandhi because of Gandhi's respect for all religious scriptures. Farooqi later became the editor of the Indian Views, a Gujarati newspaper which ran parallel to the Indian Opinion. Both these publications will be discussed in chapter 4.

Mr A.A's (#35) grandfather was a Bengali who came to Durban in about 1900. It is interesting to note that although being a Bengali he was influenced by the Gujarati Muslims in Durban and he sent his son Kasim to a Gujarati school. Sheik Mehtab was the teacher at that Gujarati school. Kasim also helped Sheik Mehtab to teach Hindu, Parsee and Muslim Gujarati pupils.

The secretary of the Transvaal United Patidar Society (a caste group) writes in their 60th Anniversary Brochure that the first of their ancestors comprising two families arrived in South Africa in 1892. Swan refers to them as 'kanbis' (caste group name) commonly known as Patels. This group has had a strong influence in the maintenance of the Gujarati language.

In Transvaal in 1885, severe restriction were placed on trading and residential rights of the traders. Natal and Cape also followed suit. Between 1898 and 1910 Indians were prohibited from entering Durban. Only those who had legitimate domicile rights were allowed to enter. Those who might have entered South Africa via Durban could have been diverted to the Cape where immigration was unrestricted until 1902.

It is not quite clear when the Gujaratis first went to the Cape Province but the residents believe that some of them had been established there by 1890. The Hindu

Gujaratis being a passive community, it is possible that some moved from Natal and Transvaal during the Anglo-Boer war in 1899. Bhana and Brain (1990) write that in 1901, 700 Indians on the ship Navaslara were refused permission to land in Natal and sailed to Cape Town.

Jivanji Govindjee first came to Johannesburg in 1904 from Valsad in Gujarat and stayed there for about a year. He participated with Mahatma Gandhi in his passive resistance campaign of 'burning' the Indian permits. Later he went to Port Elizabeth as a photographer in 1905. In 1912 he was influenced by Swami Shankaranandji (who visited South Africa) of the Arya Samaj in India and accepted the chair of the Veda Dharam Sabha. He made a great impression of the ideals of the Arya Samaj on his children and as a result his son Brijlal became an active practising priest in the Hindu community.

One of the first Gujarati immigrants of Cape Town was the father of Karsan Jaga who came as a trader with some friends in 1904. He was from a little village called Bodhali near Navsari in Gujarat. He later moved to Cape Town. Karsan Jaga himself came from India in 1921.

An Indian immigrant could not gain entry into the port of disembarkment unless he could satisfactorily complete a registration form in English. (Mr.C.C.P(#2). Permits to those Transvaal Indians who had been resident before the Boer war (1899) were granted and they were entitled to bring their families. But for the Indian, 'family' meant parents, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts which was a problem to the whites since in the western concept family was a 'nuclear' entity.



The white traders perceived the immigration of Indian traders as a threat to their small businesses. The indentured labourers were welcome as long as they served the need and went home after the contract period. Direct (Immigration Regulations Acts) and indirect efforts (a person should be reasonably literate in any European language) were made to check the inflow of free Indian immigrants into South Africa.

The Gujarati immigrants were literate in their mother tongue Gujarati but had little knowledge of English. Few had a tertiary education. It was a general perception amongst most Europeans and even some Indians that being ignorant in English meant that they were uneducated and inarticulate. The practice of oral tradition in educating children at home in a joint family has been pursued from generations. They possessed rich classical culture and language and were very loyal to their religious values. These assets made them tolerant and resolute in their lives even outside their mother country.

Most passenger Indians were not all wealthy. Their success in business was due to the fact that "the Indian trader was prepared to work long hours and to trade in remote areas where white traders were slow to respond to market needs. He proved to be adaptable and made effective use of his extended family connections to help establish himself". (Bhana and Brain 1990:74).

In the last forty years, the vertical development of the Gujaratis in the economic and professional fields has been phenomenal. The Gujarati has made economic progress far beyond his dreams. Even in his early years, limited English education was not an inhibiting factor since he had acquired his business or trading skill before he had entered the host country. Some of

the early business ventures in Natal such as the rice mill, leather shoe factory, modern laundry, flour mill, clothing factory and other enterprises, were undertaken by the Gujaratis.

As a result from the very beginning rivalry between them and the European businessmen embittered relations which led the South African government to impose restrictions crippling the trade of the Indians. The government of each province used its political power, as illustrated above, to curb the competition in business. Very soon the 'free' indentured labourers had joined in the competition.

## **2.5 SOCIOLINGUISTICS OF GUJARAT**

Like most of the major states of India, the state of Gujarat with its approximately 30 million population, is multilingual i.e. two or more languages are in regular use. Recently, a team of Gujarati businessmen visited Durban. They were asked about the use of the Gujarati language in India. They explained that a Gujarati speaker was conversant in about five or six languages of the country, besides English, since he often travelled to other linguistic areas for business purposes. Nevertheless, Gujarati being the official state language, the state government chose Gujarati as the medium of instruction in all state schools and in government.

Hindi is given importance as a national language of India. Proficiency in English and Hindi is important to follow professions outside the state. Urdu is studied widely by the Muslims. Other languages such as Rajasthani, Marathi, Sindhi which flourished on the borders are also spoken by those groups. Marathi speakers are numerous in Gujarat as are Gujarati speakers in Maharashtra since these two states were

separated politically only in 1960. Daswani(1992:239) writes, "Sindhi occupies the dubious distinction of the "third" language because about 2.2 percent of the population is Sindhi-speaking." Kachchi is spoken in Kutch which is within the boundary of Gujarat. It is regarded as a variety of Gujarati.

Two points are unique about the Gujarati language in South Africa. Compared to other Indian languages like Hindi and Tamil, which are spoken in South Africa and constitute the majority of the Indian population, Gujarati is proportionately the most spoken Indian language (Desai:1992). Secondly, Gujarati has maintained its standard form as in Gujarat.

M.K.Gandhi was instrumental in the standardization process when the Gujarati dictionary published by Gujarat Vidyapith (University founded by Gandhi) was endorsed by him. On the first page of the dictionary it is stated in Gujarati that, henceforth no one has a right to change the spelling of the Gujarati language. Therefore, in spite of the many differences in regional and local dialects of Gujarati almost everyone understands the standard Gujarati. Although spoken Gujarati may be colloquial the written Gujarati takes the standard form.

One may ask "What is so important about standardisation?." Garvin (1993:47) proposes five very important functions of a standard language. One is that the standard language serves as a unifying bond in spite of dialectal and other differences. This has been true of Gujarat with its many dialects. Within the Gujarati community persons of separate dialects will introduce themselves as being speakers of that particular dialect but to a speaker of another language group they will introduce themselves as Gujaratis. The standard language affirms the separate identity of a speech community vis-a-vis other speech

communities. It confers a certain prestige on a speech community. It allows a speech community to use its own language in order to participate in the cultural, religious and other developments in modern society. All these functions will surface in the discussion of the Gujarati language in subsequent chapters.

Gujarati language falls within the category of the Indo-European family which is the largest of the world family of languages. It belongs to the Indo-Aryan group of languages which is a sub group. The Indo Aryan further divided into Prakrits. The oldest form of Indo Aryan is Sanskrit.

Munshi (1935 ) observes that one series of phenomena attracts our attention on account of its periodic recurrence. By borrowing the charm and profundity of Sanskrit, a dialect attains literary status. In consequence, it is standardised and enriched but the gulf between the spoken language and literary form widens. When the literary form becomes unsuited for popular speech, the spoken language in turn receives literary polish with the aid of Sanskrit. Thus the Prakrits, the Apabhramsha and modern Indian languages evolved in succession from spoken to literary forms and vice versa.

Most of the modern Indian languages trace their roots to Shaurseni Apabrasha. The language spoken in 'Gurjardesh' came to be known as 'Gurjar Apabrasha'. In the 14th century, it included Rajasthani, Marwadi and Malavi languages. The forces of change operating within the languages later separated Gujarati from the others.

The Gujarati language that is written and spoken today was first written in the fifteenth century. Narsinh Mehta is said to be the 'adi kavi' first poet of the modern Gujarati literature. The Gujarati language has

remained intact in its standardised form for the last five centuries. In modern times the printing press and progress in the educational field have primarily contributed to the standardisation of languages. The written or printed Gujarati language used in the media has maintained uniformity throughout Gujarat. There is a famous saying in Gujarati regarding dialects that '*dar bar gave boli badalay*' ie. at every twenty miles the language or dialect changes. The spoken variety varies from place to place but the written form has remained standard.

Another factor which contributed to the language diversity in dialectal form in Gujarat was the caste system. People of different castes have a distinct dialect. A person's speech can identify him as being from a certain place and belonging to a certain caste. The higher castes are very mindful of the choice of words in their speech to maintain their dignity and respect while the lower castes are careless in their choice of words which may be considered 'vulgar' by the higher caste.

The Gujarati script is similar to the Devanagari script (used in Sanskrit) except for the omission of the headline on top of the script. Mahatma Gandhi had encouraged the removal of the continuous line on top of all the scripts derived from Devanagari to simplify the written form.

## **2.6 DIALECTS OF GUJARATI**

There are many dialects of the Gujarati language in Gujarat. Most of them are spoken in South Africa. *Kathiawadi* is spoken in Kathiawad or the Saurashtra region; *Surati* is spoken in South Gujarat; *Charotori* in central Gujarat; *Amdawadi* around the city of

Ahmedabad; *Parsi* in Bombay and throughout Gujarat; and *Vahora* (Bhora) spoken by Muslims.

Vahoras, Memons and Khojas are said to be converts from Hinduism to Islam. These speakers of Gujarati cerebralise the dental consonants (Bakshi 1981).

The modern Gujarati language that is written and spoken today, first made its appearance in the medieval period 1500 AD during the time of the first Gujarati poet, Narsinha Mehta. Gujarati literature ranks high amongst the main languages of India. The period before 1500 AD is known as Bhaktikal (Devotional period). The modern period after 1800AD beginning with the father of prose, Narmad, excelled in most of the literary forms known in the west. Kanaiyalal Munshi is most outstanding in the modern Gujarati literature. He is the founder president of the famous Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, an institute of Indology. During the struggle for Independence in India, Mahatma Gandhi influenced a band of writers in the Gujarat Vidhyapith. Gandhi's contribution to the development of Gujarat in every walk of life is phenomenal. He strongly believed in 'art for life's sake' and impressed on the writers to consider the masses and write for them and about them. Journalism also became very popular and monthly journals of high standard like *Urmi* and *Kumar* and Gandhi's weekly *Navjivan* were produced. Weeklies like *Gujarati* and *Prajabandhu* were also popular.

Universities are located in every town and city of Gujarat.

## CHAPTER 3

### GUJARATI LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Language is by far the most versatile medium of communication. Linguistic communication is a necessary prerequisite to the emergence of a particular speech society. The relationship between language and culture is reciprocal i.e. the form of language influences the form of culture and the form of culture influences the form of language. Language and culture are intimately related and interdependent and mostly they are acquired simultaneously. (D'souza:1992:17).

Wardhaugh (1986:218), in discussing the Sapir Whorf hypothesis writes "Sapir acknowledged the close relationship between language and culture, maintaining that they were inextricably related so that you could not understand or appreciate the one without a knowledge of the other."

In the Indian community, the language and culture are interwoven to such an extent that on close observation one invariably sees the culture mirrored in the language. One such peculiarity is in the 'culture of respect' in expression of respect accorded to adults in the use of phrases beginning with the pronoun (તું) *tuñ* i.e. you and (તમે) *tame*.

'*tuñ*' is used in a sentence where the speaker treats the listener as his equal and '*tame*' is used when the speaker wishes to acknowledge the respect of the person with whom he is conversing. Yet the same pronoun

'tuñ' is used to address God or mother, though the person does not mean to be disrespectful. Rather, in this context, it expresses a close bond between the two. In this situation the speaker has been predisposed in his choice of words.

Sharma(1993:1-5) presents many different definitions of culture as expressed by renowned people. I find Humayun Kabir's observation of culture very appealing. He says,

"Civilisation is the organisation of society which creates the conditions of culture. There can, therefore, be no culture without civilisation, but there may be civilisations which have not yet developed their culture, perhaps, what is more often the case is that there are civilised people among whom only a small section have achieved culture. We have, therefore, had and still have, races and nations that are civilised but we have not yet had any nation or race that could be regarded as cultured in all its sections and classes. Culture is the efflorescence of civilisation."

In multilingual societies minority languages are often under threat from the dominant or 'power' languages in the host society. Shift to another language, for the Gujarati speaking community (hence the Gujaratis) to English and/or Afrikaans, has been necessitated by the need to survive in the new environment. With the shift of the mother tongue a certain degree of loss of culture and assimilation of new culture is evident. Primarily the shift is evident in certain domains such as work place, multilingual gatherings and public structures like state school and libraries etc. where a dominant language takes command. In other domains



such as home, temple, and exclusive community gatherings the mother tongue remains a matter of choice. The threatened linguistic community seeks cultural and language survival in these domains.

The Indian immigrants in South Africa faced many difficulties in adapting themselves to the host country. They had left one British colony to enter another. For the first time they came face to face with the indigenous African inhabitants. In Natal they realised that none other spoke their language and practised their culture or religion. Besides their personal skills these were their communal assets. Therefore they tried to maintain their ethnic separateness and cultural affiliation amidst the unfamiliar domain.

Ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity can hardly be repressed. Therefore while accepting the need to participate in the national growth and development of the host country through political and economic networks, social cohesiveness of a community has remained an exclusive entity. The understanding and tolerance of socio-cultural diversity of each ethnic group would be a contributing factor in bringing harmony within a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society of South Africa.

Gujarati Muslims in South Africa also observe the subtle norms of the Indian culture except for those related directly to Islamic faith as explained by Mr Y.M.(#37). In India, Lateef (1990:13) cites Aggarwal (1971) and Ahmed (1973), "the Islamic cultural and religious self-referencing of Muslims has interacted with other religious and cultural groups, and has undergone changes both subtle and overt. This self-referencing is particularly important since most

Indian Muslims were Hindu converts, and reflect a certain orientation which was a part of their original social and cultural milieu."

### 3.2 EARLY LANGUAGE PRACTICES

Individuals are accepted as members of the group to the extent that their language usage conforms to the language practices of the day. The **Gujarati Hindu** trader and the **Gujarati Muslim** trader had a common language therefore communication was easier between them than with the indentured Indians. A few **Parsee** families also spoke Gujarati which they had adopted on settlement in Gujarat. These were all trading classes who shared a common language in Gujarati although their local dialects may have differed. Hindi language, which also has its roots in the Sanskrit language and is therefore closer to Gujarati was freely used to communicate with their customers, the indentured labourers, who had come from the Northern provinces of modern day Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and spoke a dialect of Hindi.

It proved difficult for the Gujarati to communicate with those who had come from the Madras Presidency and spoke Tamil or Telugu. Fortunately for the traders it was the Tamil and Telugu speakers who learnt to speak a form of Hindi which became known as "Natalie" as it was mainly spoken in Natal. This could be referred to as a *pidgin* language. The four languages involved were Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu. Hindi was the dominant language. The grammar and the vocabulary were simplified. The pronoun '**tame**' in Gujarati and '**aap**' in Hindi which is used to show respect to elders was never used by the 'Natalie' speakers. As in modern English the pronoun '**tum**' - '**you**' was used by them to

address everyone. Even the gender used in the verb which qualified the noun was dropped and the tenses were modified. Sometimes common English nouns were substituted for the Indian ones in the sentences. When English became the '*lingua franca*' of the South Africans as mentioned by Bughwan (1978), this pidgin slowly disappeared. (Desai:1992) (see Rambilass 1996:61)

The immigrant passengers had realised the importance of the English language the moment they docked at Durban Bay. Mr CCP(#2) stated that his father realised that those immigrants who were at the front of the queue and spoke and wrote in English had their passports stamped immediately and were allowed to embark. Thus the rest of them with their elementary knowledge of English tried their best to converse and write in English to impress the Immigration officials.

Even in the early years of immigration many South African Indians adopted the English medium of communication not only with 'white' communities but also between themselves and speakers of other Indian languages. Bughwan (1979 : 464) claims that for most of the Indian South Africans, English is now the *lingua franca*, signalling the loss and/or deterioration of the Indian languages which, if they survive, face a strong competition from English and other official languages of the Republic. After the Second World War English and Afrikaans gained impetus and the Indian Languages receded in the background.

The state implemented compulsory learning of the official languages. The official languages selected for state administration and education allocated two crucial speech domains and opened employment and political opportunities to the people speaking it. The official languages determined a student's chances

for academic success. A pupil in Matriculation examination had to obtain a pass in both the official languages to obtain a Matriculation exemption which would ensure his admission to tertiary education.

For the first time at a committee meeting of Foreign Languages convened by the Department of Education in 1994 at Pietermaritzburg representatives of all the minority languages in South Africa met to discuss the implications of the new linguistic dispensation of the country. At this meeting it was realised that the case of white minority languages was different from those of the Indian languages. European immigrants such as the German, French and Portuguese, although in the minority, enjoyed special privileges since they were classified as whites. Race and colour discrimination in all walks of life is very well illustrated by Joshi (1942).

The languages of the above mentioned groups were incorporated within the mainstream school curriculum. For information on German see De Kadt (1995); Portuguese Barnes & McDuling (1995); Indian Languages Mesthrie (1995). They did not share the same problems as those of Indian languages. Therefore up to now those languages have been successfully maintained. However it is hoped that the new system of democracy, where the will of the majority takes precedence, introduced in 1994 will replace apartheid education in South Africa. In this situation *all* the minority languages express fear of being marginalised.

### **3.3. MINORITY STATUS**

The minority status of the Indian community is not only numerical but also emerges in terms of social,

religious and ethnic aspects. The dilemma faced by the South African Indian community is the evolving politics of the country and its implication on their minority status. When the numerically white minority enjoyed total political power the Indians exercised legislative authority in the House of Delegates which was part of the tricameral system of the government in 1984. The main problem of the apartheid system was that it excluded the Blacks i.e. the indigenous Africans, from the decision making process. The practical concerns of the Indian community included problems of adequate housing, better education and health facilities, better employment facilities and resident and trade rights which had been restricted by the Group Areas Act of 1950. However the legitimacy of the House of Delegates was in question when it was realised that they could exercise their power only in an advisory capacity. The final approval had to come from the House of Assembly, the white segment of the tricameral parliament.

The total population of South Africa, excluding the "homelands" as recorded by Central Statistical Services in 1991 is 26,288,000. The Indians constitute not more than 863,874 (3.3%) of the total South African population. Of these about 80% live in Natal. The Gujarati Hindus constitute about 3% of the total Indian population in South Africa. The Muslim community make up approximately 15% of the Indian population but it is not quite clear how many are Gujarati Muslims. The above figures clearly indicate that the Gujarati community is a minority within a minority group. Ambrose and Williams (1980 : 53) outline some common features in the problems facing many linguistic minorities. These may be associated with decrease in number of speakers, or with a reduction of quality and status in the languages

themselves; with changing economic circumstances affecting individuals and communities; or with the political implications of language change.

There has always been uncertainty as to their status in the racially prejudiced and discriminatory laws of the country. The community respected and pursued their traditional heritage i.e. language, culture and religion. Religion and culture have remained two stabilising forces in the lives of Indian South Africans. The South African government policy has always been to promote and propagate Christianity. The majority of the Indian population belong to the Hindu faith. The 1980 census shows 62.4% of the total population of Indians to be Hindus. The Gujarati Language is used in the Gujarati temples at all times. The chanting of the ceremonial verses may be in Sanskrit which is revered and accepted as part of the heritage of Gujarati. Ramphal (1989:714) observes that 'resistance to change has been relatively stronger in the areas of religion, marriage and courtships.'

### **3.4 URBANISATION**

The South African Indian population has moved towards urbanisation. The Gujarati speaking Hindus, from the very beginning have been concentrated in the centre of the city (Kuper: 1960). The large number of traders and servicemen found it convenient and economical to reside in the city centre. As a result the schools and halls built by the Gujarati community are located in the centre of Durban. The temples of the Gujaratis' are also situated in the heart of the city. The elite Gujarati stall holders in the Morning Vegetable Market dealt in commodities like fruit and nuts which gained larger profit than low profit vegetables. Durban city

centre was the hub of economic activities and the Gujaratis were settled here.

There were a few exceptions. They were the professionals who enjoyed the comfort of luxury houses outside the central business district. The situation was similar in other city centres in Natal where the Gujarati speaking Hindus lived. The Gujarati community was a close knit society.

It has been commonly suggested that urbanisation is a causal factor in bringing about language shift. On the contrary, until the Group Areas Act urbanisation in Natal had proved to be a favourable factor in maintaining the Gujarati language. When the Group Areas Act was enforced, the movement of the Gujaratis into the suburban regions had great repercussions in the religio - social progress. (cf. Liberson (1967) - French in Quebec and Li (1982) Chinese in Chinatown.

### **3.5 CULTURAL SURVIVAL**

#### **3.5.1 ETHNICITY**

Language tends to become the focus of feelings of ethnic identity. Minority groups such as Welsh are adamant about preserving their language or they feel that they would soon lose their ethnic distinctiveness (Greenberg 1977:90). It is through their mother tongue that they maintain their ethnic boundaries. Maintenance of the Gujarati language has been important to preserve the identity and maintain solidarity, culture and religion in the Gujarati community. (see table 3.1) The question asked of the respondents was:

"Do you think it is important to know Gujarati to preserve Identity, Culture of Religion? Table 3.1 gives the responses.

**TABLE 3.1**

**The importance of the Gujarati language to preserve Identity, Culture and Religion**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Identity</b>	146	77.2
<b>Culture</b>	168	88.9
<b>Religion</b>	139	73.5

n=189

Over seventy percent of the respondents were positive in their response while some did not answer. This question was particularly asked since some people felt that Identity could be preserved through culture and religion and the latter could be learned through the medium of English. The symbiotic relationship between language and culture has also been determined.

The Gujaratis in South Africa display the characteristics of an 'ethnic group'. Gudykunst and Schmidt (1988 : 1) in discussing ethnic identity note that research indicated that ethnic group members identify more closely with those who share their language than with those who share their cultural background Individuals also evaluate speakers perceived as in-group members more favourably than those perceived as outgroup members (Hogg, Joyce and Abrams:1984 - cited in Desai(1992)). Even in determining social identity this holds true of the Gujaratis. The 'Gujaratis' identify themselves in the broader community through their linguistic affiliation



rather than religion or any other factor. Mr I.K. (#39) a Muslim Gujarati, explained that Gujarati was used exclusively at home and with other members of the Gujarati community, Arabic was used in the Mosque and English with the outgroup community. Only those groups have engaged in language maintenance activities in which language is closely associated with ethnic distinctiveness. This is similar to the criteria for identity applied by the Indian Surinamese as '*apan jati, apan log, apan bhasha, and apan desh*'. (Gautam: 1997).

Many ethnic groups use a distinctive language associated with their ethnic identity. Where a choice of language is available for communication it is often possible for an individual to signal their ethnicity by the language they choose to use. Even when a complete conversation in an ethnic language is not possible people may use short phrases, verbal fillers or linguistic tags which signal ethnicity. Holmes (1992:190) e.g. *kem cho* (How are you?) Are you going to the *natak* (play) tonight? When people belong to the same group they often speak similarly. There may also be speech peculiarities. For example the Gujaratis tend to pronounce 'u' for a 'ri' in Sanskrit words like *trusha* instead of *trisha*; *sanskirut* instead of *sanskrit*. In English words they pronounce the 'v' like a 'w' in words like *very, vulgar and vowel*.

Clasquin (1997) noted that

"after 130 years of being denied a true South African identity by the white establishment, the Hindu population still regards itself as Indian first and South African second. It is only natural that there should then be a desire to identify with one's specific ethnic roots, and with little access to other aspects of one's original culture,

religion would seem to be the natural root for this desire to follow."

Even when the ethnic language disappears distinctive symbols of ethnicity remain such as food, dress, customs and religious practices. There are many other ways that ethnic minority may use to distinguish themselves from other groups.

### 3.5.2 CLASS AND CASTE

It is important to discuss caste here since numerous books having been written in India and elsewhere on this subject. Scholars in South Africa have also done special research.[see Pillay(1991) and Kuper(1960)] It has been observed by most scholars that amongst the Indians the Gujaratis are the most rigid in the practise of the caste system. However true this may be it certainly seems to be losing importance in recent times.

Reddy(1987) cites Prof. Max Muller "There is no authority in the hymns of the Vedas, primary Hindu scriptures, for the complicated system of caste". Society was divided into four classes and there was no rigid caste system in Vedic India. The Indian society was divided into four Varnas Varna is the classification of society in four groups:viz. *Brahmins*, *Khastriyas*, *Vaishyas* and *Shudras*. The *Brahmins* were the priest or learned class and *Khastriyas* were the warriors who defended the country from enemies and *Vaishyas* and *Shudras* were the productive class for the whole society. Depending on one's **guna** (character) and **karma** (effort/deed) a person would belong to the relevant class. There is no law to prohibit different classes of people from

living together and from eating and drinking together. Also there is no law to prohibit the marriage of different castes.

Reddy (1987) explains that much later after the Vedic period by the time of Arthashastra and Manusmriti the caste system had established itself in religious and literary texts. Each Varna had its own occupation and it was regarded as hereditary in the medieval period. Caste is acquired by birth and there is no possibility whatsoever for giving up one's caste and acquiring another.

In the early 1900's when most of the Hindu Gujarati passenger Indians came to South Africa (see table 1) they carried with them their social and cultural traditions. Very soon many of them organised themselves into caste and regional societies (see the section on cultural organisations in his chapter). Rosenthal (1991:67) found that "Organisations which cater solely for the interests of members of single sub-castes exist among the Gujarati-speaking Hindus only." "In the case of the Moslem gam organisations, some sub-caste organisations are barely existent while others are wealthy, and efficiently run."

The "upper" castes try to maintain their higher status, and the middle and lower castes have successfully tried to improve their status. The lower castes realised that their status could be improved by improving their economic and professional status rather than following rituals followed by upper castes. Today they have excelled themselves in the professional field and command a great respect from the 'higher' castes.

Presently occupation no longer has correlation to caste. The caste system has become weak and its traditional structure has eroded. Yet sometimes amongst older members caste sentiments in terms of 'we' still persist. This is prevalent in all the caste groups irrespective of the status of the caste.

Pillay (1991) in her sample survey found that 100% of the Gujaratis stated that caste was the most important factor in marriage while the same 100% said that they did not believe in the caste system. Although most practices (like sharing food with one another) are becoming unimportant between the castes, marriage still remains a sensitive issue. The other question asked was that "Would you marry someone of a lower caste?" The response of the Gujaratis was an 88.9% yes. The younger generation more influenced by the western culture are beginning to reject the caste system even in marriages.

Most of the caste groups are **endogamous** groups. Boys and girls are not allowed to marry outside the caste. Those Gujarati Hindus who could not find wives of the same caste in South Africa went to seek them in India and so preserve caste endogamy. Now the restrictions have become flexible. With higher education and better economic status inter-caste marriages are on the increase.

When one lives within caste communities one can identify a person from his/her speech as to which caste he/she belongs to. Caste dialect serves as a symbol of group identity and solidarity. It is similar to a regional dialect. The lower caste groups tend to pronounce the dental sounds ta, tha, da, dha as cerebrals ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha. The higher caste children are reprimanded if they substituted cerebrals for dentals.

### 3.5.3 JOINT FAMILY

The traditional joint family system has been most instrumental in maintaining the moral and ethical values respected in an Indian home. The joint family is called *kutumb* in Gujarati. Generally three to four generations are found in one *kutumb*. This comprises the head of the household and his wife, his married sons and their wives, plus his unmarried sons and unmarried daughters and the children of his married sons. Sometimes they may include the head's parent or a widowed sister. In few cases the family may reach four generations. (Desai 1992). It is a very popular system practised in hundreds of thousands of villages of India.

As reported by Jithoo(1975), Ramphal(1987) and Desai(1992) there are many advantages of the joint family system. Primarily the relationship with kin is strengthened and family values are inculcated in each generation. It has proved to be economically profitable. Each person works for the common good of all and all for one. It promotes Vedic ideal of 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam' - the whole world is one big family. Religious teachings and values are instilled and this serves as a bond and promotes the idea of the family that prays together stays together.

What is relevant to this study is the role played by the joint family in the verbal transmitting of mother tongue to each generation and hence its maintenance. Many heads of families interviewed agreed that due to the joint family system the Gujarati language has been successfully maintained. Their parents were able to speak only Gujarati therefore their children had to converse with them in Gujarati. They noticed that now that their parents are deceased or the family members

moved out of the joint family the younger children are less fluent in the mother tongue. However, the parents of these children are bilingual (speaking Gujarati and English languages) and if the joint family system still continued it is highly unlikely that it would transmit the Gujarati language to their grandchildren in the same way.

Jithoo's study in Durban (1970:180) revealed that there are two major forces operating to maintain the joint family. These are economic and religious forces. The religious link holding the family together lasted longer than the potent economic link. She reported that in her survey of 75 Indian students only 10.7% favoured the continuation of joint family.

With the changes in the social climate women appear to be resisting their passive and subservient role in the home. In South Africa there is a clash of values between the conservative mother-in-law and modernised daughter-in-law. The Indian women have been influenced by western concepts of equality, democracy and women's rights, and seek roles for themselves outside the traditional bounds of the home.

Endogamy was an ideal among the Gujarati Hindus and to preserve their tradition the parents took their children to India to choose marriage partners. The joint family system was never threatened as the new bride from India was accustomed to the traditional family. Endogamy and the Joint Family System began to decline in South Africa among Gujaratis after the implementation of the Group Areas Act of 1950 and The Immigration Regulation Amendment Act of 1953. The process of resettlement of Indian families had serious repercussions on the traditional way of life. Oosthuizen (1975 : 19) states that " the uprooting of

families, the breaking up of the joint family system and their re-establishment in large new townships, led many to reveal the feeling of insecurity in spite of the improved housing enjoyed in the new circumstances".

A report of The South African Institute of Race Relations (1966 : 20) stated that "A characteristic feature of Indian life in the past has been the 'joint family system' which involved two, three or more related families sharing the same residence - municipal houses are intended as single family residence only." This was the beginning of the break up of the joint family system in South Africa. Many other reasons can be attributed to the break up of the joint family system. See Ramphal (1989:74 - 76).

Among the several reasons for the shift of the Gujarati language one has been the break up of the joint family system. The joint family provided for communication in the mother tongue between many generations. There were always older members of the family who ensured the use of Gujarati by the younger generation. The young were regularly taught nursery rhymes and stories as well as devotional songs by the grandparents and even some parents. Daily conversation was conducted in the Gujarati language. Most of the young parents in the community agree that their children are deprived of the Gujarati language since they now live in a nuclear family. Ms A.P (#24)

Although the joint family is a tradition and seen as an ideal form of social structure in the Gujarati community the social changes in the recent years have accelerated the breakdown of the joint family system. Rosenthal's research (1976 : 230) revealed that "The Hindus have adhered to the norms of agnatic kinship

more strongly than the Muslims; they have preserved the joint family system to a slightly greater extent than the Muslims; the practice of outgroup marriage, while negligible among the Hindus, appears to be increasing among the Moslems. Jithoo's research on the same subject in 1970 among the youth had revealed that only 24% of university students favoured the joint family system whereas 76% did not favour it. (1970 : 127).

The younger people pursued higher education and acquired a western- oriented outlook in life. The sample survey of this research revealed that 74.6% of the sample believed that the breakdown of the joint family system had lessened/diminished the usage of written and spoken Gujarati language in the last 30 years. It can be concluded that there is a breakdown in the joint family system among the Gujaratis and that it has had an adverse effect on the maintenance of the Gujarati language.

The younger generation is more and more susceptible to westernisation. In the nuclear family tradition the young girl/boy prefers to find a partner chosen by him/herself who will be compatible to his/her personality and interests. This leads to the question of which vernacular the child of an inter-linguistic marriage should learn. The conflict and the complexity of the problem calls for ingenuity. A Tamil speaking father and a Gujarati speaking mother cannot resolve which vernacular language their child must learn. If a compromise is reached the child will learn one of the mother tongues, usually the one spoken by the mother. In a conflict situation the child learns English only. Hence the mother tongue is ignored. Appel & Muysken (1987) refer to research conducted by Pulte (1979) in Oklahoma Cherokee Community. In every family where a



Cherokee-speaker was married to a non-Cherokee speaker the children were found to be monolingual speakers of English.

The sample survey revealed that 75.1% agreed that marriage outside the Gujarati community was responsible for a decrease in the use of written and spoken Gujarati language. 12.2% had not specified and the balance of 12.7% felt that marriage outside the community was not responsible for such a decline. Nevertheless as Ramphal (1989:87) states, socio-economic and educational factors are now becoming more influential in determining choice of spouse rather than linguistic, caste and religious determinants, therefore decline in Gujarati as a mother tongue is inevitable.

#### **3.5.4 COMMUNITY CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS**

Socio-cultural organisations have played a very significant role in the maintenance of culture, religion and language in the entire Gujarati speaking community of South Africa. These organisations were established from early years for that very purpose when the Gujaratis settled in South Africa. One must bear in mind that in the period of the early 20th century they had no intention of settling permanently in South Africa. Yet they had begun to get organised and strengthen their community.

The chief aims and objectives of these organisations are to preserve and promote cultural, social, religious and educational welfare of the Gujarati community. They often host a variety of functions - religious and cultural and create a wide variety of interest for all age groups. People have the

opportunity to interact with other Gujarati speakers and participate in traditional dancing and singing. It seems the main function is to keep the culture and religion alive.

A particularly close cultural relationship existed between Gujarati speaking Muslims and Hindus. Muslim organisations were formed basically to promote religion and culture which was also done by their Madressas. Associations had been engaged in the general welfare of the Gujarati community in fostering the many facets in the educational, social, religious and cultural activities amongst the members of the community. They had a sense of loyalty, sacrifice and commitment throughout their service. Despite the many problems and obstacles which they faced in their endeavours the community has worked with great enthusiasm and responsibility and that has contributed largely to the progress and development of the Gujarati community as a whole. A message by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society reads, "Appreciation goes to the foresight and efforts and founders of the Samaj for years of continued effort to preserve the Gujarati language, customs and heritage." (THSS:1982)

The Gujarati Hindu community organisations have stood the test of time and are still active in the maintenance of the Gujarati language, culture and Hindu religion. These associations have been largely responsible for keeping together the Gujarati speakers in close unity. Kuper (1960:80) writes that "these associations proliferate not only along the usual lines of interest in specific activities - economic, religious, political, welfare or recreational - but also along lines of racial tribal and cultural cleavages". The chief aims and objects of the organisations are to promote social, cultural,

physical, educational and ethical values for the upliftment of the community. Numerous societies large and small have been formed over the years to fulfil these needs. Notwithstanding their contribution to culture and religion I will illustrate how they also contributed to the maintenance of the Gujarati language.'

#### **3.5.4.1 SOCIO-RELGIO-CULTURAL SOCIETIES**

I have chosen to separate the male and female organisations simply because in examining the membership I found that in the first 75 years of the main organisations women were not listed as members. There were several reasons for this situation. Firstly, most of the women joined their husbands with their children in South Africa only in the 1930's. This was due to the immigration law of 1927 which is explained later in the chapter. It is also true that in the earlier years women played a subservient role in the home and as such they were not considered literate/qualified to be able to participate in male dominated official meetings. It must also be stated that there was no rule in the constitution on excluding women. In the later years most of the societies has a women's group affiliated to them which is apparent from their annual brochures.

The Indian women in South Africa were mobilised by the actions and principles of Gandhi and particularly his wife Kasturba. I have chosen only a few male and women's societies though there were many of them I interacted with and it would be impossible to give an account of all of them here. Their aims and objectives were similar though their activities to accomplish

their objectives varied. One could do a further research on this subject.

### **Male dominated community organisations**

In the first quarter of the twentieth century major Gujarati Hindu organisations had been formed. The first of such pioneer society **Surat Hindu Association (SHA)** was established on 1 August 1907 in Natal. The members belonging to this society were the passenger Indians who came from the district of Surat. The difficulties experienced by the new immigrants were of great concern and they took the task of assisting them. One interviewee observed that this body served as a 'welfare' structure and took all the Gujaratis under its wings.

The people from Kathiawad district also formed the **Kathiawad Arya Mandal** in 1908. In the early years they assisted Gandhi in the Satyagraha Movement and gave aid to those passive resisters who had returned to Durban after having been previously deported. Many of these were destitute and the organisation fed and housed them. (*Brochure KHSS 1953*). Kathiawad Arya Mandal dissolved when a stronger and more active **Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj (KHSS)** was formed in 1943.

Similarly in Transvaal in 1912 the **Transvaal United Patidar Society (TUPS)**, which is a strong body today, was established by a caste group called the 'Patels'. An umbrella body the **Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj** for all the Gujaratis irrespective of caste was only established in 1932. The Indians settled much later in the Transvaal and the Cape than in Natal.

Transvaal and Cape Provinces, have a fair share of the Gujarati population as indicated in table 2.3. In Cape Town the **Kshatriya Mitra Mandal** was formed in

1922. This was a caste group and since most of the members of the community belonged to this caste it was not surprising that there was little objection at the time. However, due to youth pressure the society changed its name to **Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj** in 1996 and became open to all members of the community irrespective of caste. In 1973 The **Cape Hindu Cultural Society** was established with membership open to all the Gujaratis.

These major organisations serve as parent bodies of the Hindu Gujaratis in South Africa. All of the above organisations strengthened themselves financially so that they could purchase properties to erect buildings which would serve as a basis of future activities. The premises had a community hall, and classrooms were built for their children's mother tongue and English education. Temples were built much later since priority was given to formal education. Unlike the Hindus the Muslims built a mosque in every area where there were pockets of Muslim residents.

All the organisations based on caste were also established in the first quarter of the twentieth century. In India they had followed the same pattern and many of them even became linked to their counterparts in India and globally. A good example of this is the **Shree Africa Darjee Gnati Mahasabha**, who by occupation are tailors, which has attempted to link with the Darjee community worldwide. The caste groups or *gnatis* have also very successfully networked nationally. One such has been the **Kshtriya Maha Sabha of South Africa** who by occupation had been shoemakers. This group has played a significant role in the establishment and maintenance of the Gujarati schools in the Cape Province where they have been numerically larger group than others.

**The United Patidar Society** is another caste based society which has remained sturdy and realised its aims of serving the social and religious needs of the people. Its Education Council controls and manages and runs a Gujarati school They erected in 1943 a beautiful school by the name of Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir. They claim a first class library containing over 4,000 books in Gujarati and Hindi on various subjects. By occupation the *Patidars* or *Patels* are farmers who are said to produce gold from the land. They are also traders and command the position of a chief or *mukhi* in a village.

Most of the rigid caste restrictions have been watered down and their relationship with other groups is friendly. The strongest resistance probably remains in marriage. The weakening of the caste system is also due to its rejection by the neo-Hindu reformist movements which attract many adherents from the Gujarati community.

#### **Community response to the need for formal schools.**

The progress of Indian education in Natal was slow and by the intervention of the Indian government negotiations led to the 1927 Cape Town Agreement. The South African government was forced to play a meaningful role in the general welfare and education of the Indians. The Provincial government was responsible for setting up English medium schools. The 'upliftment clause' pleased the Indians. The Union government wanted the domiciled Indians to conform to western standards of life. Those who wished to emigrate would be assisted to do so. Vernacular languages were excluded from the mainstream education. It was resolved that the community would take care of

the mother tongue education. Until this period there were no well organised large community schools.

At the same time under the new immigration laws affecting the Indians, those living in South Africa could only bring their children before they were 16 years old and as such they had to be accompanied by their mothers. As a result many families had to bring their wives and children here. This resulted in the increase of the population of the children. That is when the parent community organisations resolved to establish proper Gujarati schools.

SHA in 1934 erected a school in the city centre to impart vernacular education. In 1945 KHSS conducted an English and a Gujarati Primary School on its premises in Lorne Street. Similar structures were erected in the Transvaal and the Cape. THSS and TUPS besides their other activities established Gujarati schools in Johannesburg in 1935 and 1936 respectively. In the Cape the Port Elizabeth Hindu Seva Samaj started a Gujarati school in 1931 and The East London Hindu Society opened its doors to their Gujarati School in 1942. In Cape Town the United Hindu Association conducted its Gujarati school from 1947. Thus it is evident that the Gujarati community organisations were very active in each province and made every effort to establish Gujarati schools in the main cities. Other smaller towns where the Gujaratis had settled also conducted Gujarati schools. (see Desai 1992).

**Cultural Institution of Self-study (Sanskritic Swadhyalaya)** was established in 1973 in Johannesburg which was different from the normal societies. Within its aims and objectives, one was "to organise and arrange contacts with motherland and other countries.

Since its inception the institution on four occasions (1974, 1976, 1978, 1982) has arranged India tours for Gujarati speakers. The South African Gujaratis joined members of a group from India and stayed together (on a train coach) interacting with each other in Gujarati. For a month they toured together and they visited most of the historic places of Gujarat. This instilled in them a sense of pride for the language, culture and religion. One of the members on the tour said "I never realised that there were so many speakers of the Gujarati language and it held such a status and prestige somewhere in the world."

#### **3.5.4.2 WOMEN'S GROUPS**

In Natal the women of the Gujarati community united under one banner, The **Gujarati Mahila Mandal**, (GMM). Although the common factor which brought them together was the Gujarati language they desired to serve their own Gujarati community plus other communities eradicating the differences of race, colour and creed. The GMM was established by prominent women of the Gujarati community in 1930 in Durban. Sushila Gandhi, daughter-in-law of Mahatma Gandhi, was one of the founder members and instrumental in the formation of the society.

These women had very little education but were competent in the Gujarati language, culture and religion. The members comprised also of women of Parsee and Muslim faith who were Gujarati speaking although the majority of the members were Hindus. Objections were raised when many suggested that the society's name be Gujarati Hindu Mahila Mandal. The emphasis remained on Gujarati belonging to any faith.



The mother played a very significant role at home in the upbringing of the child and inculcating the moral and ethical values according to the Hindu scriptures through the medium of Gujarati. To further this aim a 'Bal Mandir' - nursery school was established in 1950 by the Gujarati Mahila Mandal of Durban.

In 1991 the Gujarati Mahila Mandal of Durban shouldered a magnanimous project - that of building a modern nursery school. A nursery school with modern educational equipment and trained teachers was opened to children of all communities irrespective of race, language and religion. The teaching of the Gujarati language is still part of the curriculum of the school..

The **Port Elizabeth Gujarati Mahila Mandal** was established in 1942. The women were inspired by Mr. Ranchod Varma a prominent member of the community. He taught them about the Hindu religion. The women were mainly involved in the upliftment and promulgation of culture and religion. Literacy classes were conducted in the Gujarati and English languages for the benefit of the members by both the groups. The group members participated in a Garba competition with members of East London women's group.

Both the above organisations have proudly celebrated their Golden Jubilee. Their main aims were to propagate Gujarati language, culture and religion. The other aims were to serve the needy and destitute of other South African communities. Adult literacy classes have been conducted for housewives who wished to improve their Gujarati language.

The meetings of the Mandals were constitutionally conducted in Gujarati and the minutes were recorded in

Gujarati. Young Gujarati women have been continually encouraged to become members and as a result a continuity in the activities of the Mandal has been maintained. A display of traditional Gujarati dress, food and festivals has been the highlight of their many functions. They have participated in Gujarati debates and cultural competitions on a variety of subjects.

### **National and Regional Cultural Organisations of the Gujaratis**

The Gujarati Hindus were bound by their language and religion. Yet within the community there continued to be caste and regional differences. The foresight of a Durban Gujarati scholar, Nardev Vedalankar made it possible for a fragmented community to be united. On 31 May 1974 a meeting of prominent Gujaratis from the four provinces took place. It was an opportunity to unite the Gujaratis in this country. The initiative met with great support and a year later the first National Gujarati Convention was held in Durban.

**The South African Gujarati Maha Parishad (SAGMP)** was established in 1975. The principle aim and objective is to bring about unity among the Gujarati Hindu Community of South Africa. The members comprised of both men and women. The other aims were: to encourage and foster brotherhood and co-operation among the community; to afford guidance in social, cultural, religious and educational matters and to promote economic welfare; to promote Gujarati language and literature. The Parishad established regional branches in Natal, Transvaal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape regions. Every two years one of the centres hosted the national eidteddfod which brought the

Gujaratis together. Presently, The Natal Gujarati Parishad (NGP) seems to be the only provincial representative body active in South Africa.

**Natal Gujarati Parishad (NGP)** has a regular annual programme to achieve its objectives. The Annual Gujarati Eisteddfod is the first programme of the year. This yearly competition is held for the promotion of language and culture. There are three divisions - Adult, Senior and Junior sections. The competition categories are :recital of poetry, story telling, solo dances, drama, music, recital of Gita, folk dancing, speech and group singing. All the items are rendered in the Gujarati language.

In the early years great enthusiasm was shown by the competitors. The programme had to be held over two weekends and ended at midnight. Most of the competitors were from the regional Gujarati schools and came from towns such as Pietermaritzburg, Stanger, Ladysmith and Durban. Large audiences witnessed the presentation of culture and language at their best. Competition in Gujarati essay writing and story writing contributed much to improve the standard of the Gujarati language.

In recent years the number of participants for the eisteddfods has decreased at an alarming rate. Despite the efforts of the officials, the negative attitude of the people results in failure to attract meaningful numbers of participants. A general apathy towards language, culture and religion pervades the Gujarati community.

The Parishad also hosts cultural activities like Garba (folk dances), Performances of Gujarati plays by local and overseas artists, visiting dignitaries (speakers

and singers) and any others which would help the promotion of the Gujarati language.

In the Transvaal, the **Mahatma Gandhi Satabdi Samiti** established in 1969, on the occasion of Gandhi's birth centenary celebration. Annually this committee arranges competitions in speech, dances, garba, drama and songs. It also arranges arts and crafts exhibitions. The aims of the organisation are to maintain culture and the Gujarati language and promote the ideals of Gandhian philosophy.

**The Surya Kala Niketan**, established in 1974 by a group of youth, is essentially a Gujarati cultural organisation. It places emphasis on the cultural aspect of the social interaction of the community. It brings together the youth and presents an annual cultural show. The members of this group are also frequently invited by the Muslim community on wedding occasions, *of mehnndhi*, to render items of Garba.

Participation of youth is crucial in any community in the preservation and continuity of culture and language. Sociolinguists have emphasized the role of family in transmitting mother tongue from one generation to another. The role of youth has not been sufficiently dealt with to be able to comment on it. The youth may serve as a bridging gap between the generations. After conducting interviews with some youth I found that the youth lacked unity in the ethnic communities. One reason given was that peer pressure from their own and all other linguistic groups was strong and they feared being labelled ethnic. Hence, their drifting away from their mother tongue.

In spite of this the **Lenasia Yuvak Mandal** of Johannesburg established in 1969 have been successful in attracting the youth. In his report of the Silver Jubilee celebration he writes,

"The tapestry of our existence is inundated with selfish motives and acts of convenience. We have a heritage and culture so rich and dynamic which, if utilised purposefully, can contribute towards the rejuvenation of our cultural identity. This in turn will have a ripple effect in society and for the betterment of our people and the country."

The group has been trying to promote Gujarati through its annual magazine. (see appendix x)

### **3.6 USE OF THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE WITHIN GUJARATI SOCIETIES**

Many Gujarati institutions, some with large membership of 500 members and smaller ones with a membership of 50 members were interviewed regarding the choice of language in their various activities. Fifteen societies were interviewed and in the first question "which language is used to conduct the meeting?" only 4 of them stated that their meetings were conducted in Gujarati language. All the others revealed that their meetings were conducted in Gujarati and English. The next question was, "which language is used to note the minutes of the meeting?" The response was the same as the first question.

The next two important questions asked were -  
"Previously were the minutes noted in Gujarati?  
If yes, when did you change to English?"

Except for one society which was established in 1974 all responded in a positive 'yes'. Only one group said they changed to English in 1969 while half of them had changed in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

In reply to a question "In which language are the newsletters/pamphlets sent to the community?" 2 groups said that they sent them in English only while 4 sent them in Gujarati and all the others (9) claimed that they sent them in both the languages.

The responses of this survey clearly indicate that in the earlier years the Gujarati language was used by the members to a greater extent than in the last thirty years. This indicates that the community had moved to bilingualism. This may be the result of language loyalty that the community had strived to maintain it as long as it was possible and whether this will be a stable bilingualism will depend on the new generations.

### **3.7 LANGUAGE USAGE IN THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

The organisations have grown progressively stronger and impress upon the community the need for mother tongue education and maintenance of religious and cultural practices. Scholars are invited frequently to deliver discourses on language and religion. They have reinforced the importance of mother tongue, religion and culture. Public religious lectures such as mythological narratives draw larger audience than philosophical discourses. Speeches are in Indian languages and often in an oratorical style. Often discussion with the youth has revealed that they find it difficult to follow discourse because of the high standard of Gujarati being used.

Almost all the societies, caste or regional, have an Annual get-together. A variety concert is staged and Gujarati language is used in most of the items but Hindi is very popular in the songs and dances. Competitions are held for the best traditional dress among the children. Prizes are awarded for good performance in any educational field. Gujarati cuisine is served.

The Hindu Gujaratis celebrate the cultural and religious festivals of Holi, Shivaratri, Ramnavmi, Janmashtami, Navaratri and Divali. Life cycle rituals-sanskaras such as birth, death and marriage are also very important to them. In the sanskaras marriage is given priority. At marriage there are many occasions for the family and friends to get together. They begin with writing of the invitations, followed by engagement, *haldi* (applying a paste of turmeric powder and oil and perfume to the bride and the groom), *sanji na geet* (singing of wedding songs), *griha shanti yajna* (offering of dry medicinal herbs and food in the fire). There is a range of activities that support the use of the Gujarati language.

The most popular and colourful and vibrant expression of culture amongst the Gujaratis is the *Garba* folk dance. Though it is associated with Navaratri most cultural or religious occasions are celebrated with the traditional *Garba* or *Raas* by the Hindu Gujarati community. It brings alive the tradition of the folk dance accompanied by Gujarati *garba* songs and a pair of *dandias* (colourful rounded sticks) and brightly coloured traditional costumes. Men and women singing folk songs, mostly of devotion to the mother deity, and other songs of love addressed to Krishna, move in circles to the accompaniment of appropriate rhythmic

movements. Raas is associated with Krishna who was believed to have invented it.

Women of Gujarat from early times have made *raas* under the name of *garabo* a special feature of many occasions. It came to be performed annually during the first ten days of the lunar month of Asvin sacred to Goddess Amba. They dance in a circle, around a burning lamp placed in the centre (*garbha*) of an earthen jar with holes, singing in Gujarati lyrics of devotional songs to the deity. For Gujaratis who have settled outside India it has become a form of entertainment where young and old members of the community are drawn together.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

The Gujarati community of South Africa offers a good opportunity for the study of the patterns of language use of an immigrant minority community. Its particular language practices of the first generation are unique to this region.

The ethnic nature of the community has enabled it to safeguard its language and culture and religion. The minority status and its implications in a multilingual community has motivated it to efficiently organise itself into community associations. Besides other facets it had taken responsibility to impart mother tongue education.

Several laws and legislation seriously affected the shaping of the cultural paradigm of the community. The Cape Town Agreement decreed that Indians could go home or adhere to British colonial regime. The Indian culture was viewed disdainfully and the Indian



languages were not included in the mainstream school curriculum.

The minority status and diversity in religion and language posed a problem not only to the authorities but within the community itself. Calpin (1949:22) wrote "it would simplify matters very much in South Africa were all Indians either all Hindus or all Muslims, for it is safe to say that communal incompatibility is as great an obstacle to the solution of the Indian problem in South Africa as it is in the larger context of India." Calpin was referring to the Indian "problem". There has to be shift from this paradigm in the new democratic South Africa. Minority communities are not problems, but peculiar and valuable assets of any nation. For the state the presence of five different spoken Indian languages within a minority community and its successful implementation in state schools presented a strategic problem.

The onslaught on the morale and confidence of the local Indian and the debilitating effects of external forces has not been able to completely shake its foundations. The community still places its confidence in its parent religio-cultural bodies to lead and guide them through any crises.

The caste and joint family system are playing a lesser role in the social lives of the Gujaratis of South Africa. The caste system has a stigma attached to it therefore most of the youth influenced by western culture detached itself from it. The social changes and especially the education of women brought an end to the caste system.

Cultural organisations and their role in establishing schools and promoting cultural activities have served

to strengthen the community. Local eisteddfods are extremely important means of preserving culture and language. In the last few decades these have proven to be very popular in the community.

## CHAPTER 4

### LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE IN THE MINORITY GUJARATI COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Like knowledge, language is a type of a wealth, the more one uses it the more is added to the store or bank without decreasing it. We all participate in its use and in doing so we preserve it. It belongs to anyone and everyone who uses it. Yet we have compartmentalised, enclaved this treasure and put our tags on it.

Sociolinguistic study is concerned with the relationship between language and society and identifies the social functions of language. In examining several studies of sociolinguistics I have found that there are many sets of factors that can predict maintenance or shift in an immigrant or minority language. In fact many factors causing either shift or maintenance are inter-related and may overlap. I have used models and theoretical frameworks presented by Holmes(1992); Sridhar(1989); Fishman (1966); Appel & Muysken (1987); Mesthrie (forthcoming)

In this chapter and the next I shall focus on those aspects of sociolinguistic study which are related to Language Maintenance and Language Shift (LMLS) in linguistic minority communities with special emphasis on the Gujarati community of South Africa. Though many factors seem to be also similar to the Gujarati language situation in South Africa there are peculiarities present in the specific settings. This study illustrates the degree of language Maintenance and Shift from a sociolinguistic perspective based on empirical research.

Scholars of sociolinguistics have concerned themselves on the plight of the minorities and offered some very valuable evaluation of the situations.

"The minority's linguistic tenacity and the majority's tolerance of linguistic pluralism determine the maintenance of minority language and culture." Pattanayak (1991:x)

Bhatt (1992) cites Riley(1975) on LMLS:

"Wherever two languages come into contact, there often develops a conscious awareness of the indigenous value system among the interacting groups."

Bhatt continues that,

"It is indeed the special virtue of the contact situation to produce different types of attitudes reflecting, by and large, what a particular code accomplishes for the user in terms of status, identity, mobility and advancement. Such awareness could either lead to (a) language maintenance, characterised by the predominant use of the mother tongue throughout the entire lifetime of the group, or (b) language shift, where all the members of a given mother tongue group come to speak the language of some other group." (Bhatt 1992:56)

This is the outcome of language contact and the consequences a migrant community will have to contend with if they settle in the new region permanently. In the Diaspora the Gujarati speaking population in Nairobi (Liberson and McCabe 1978), Gujaratis in New York (Sridhar 1992), Gujaratis in Leicester (Bhatt, Barton and Jones 1994), in South Africa (Desai 1992) have encountered diverse

linguistic groups and have attempted to preserve the Gujarati language and culture to varying degrees of success. Migrant communities have to meet the challenges presented by the host community, and the Gujarati's have had to do likewise.

Sridhar (1992) concluded that the "term MAINTENANCE and thereby, by extension, the term SHIFT need to be redefined. Complete maintenance seems to be an unlikely proposition, since it does not exist even in India"

The status of a language is governed by major factors such as politics, economics and social structure of a country. There are many other factors which may have a direct or indirect bearing on the language, e.g. demographics, education, language planning, urbanization, vitality of the minority group, standardization, religion and media. There are also several variables which may predict LMLS e.g. domains of language use, attitudes, language loyalty, acculturation, bilingualism, code switching etc.

#### **4.2. POLITICAL POWER**

Language and Politics are inevitably related and influence each other. Pool (1993) cites Edelman (1977):

"those who have political power use it to get power over language, and those who have power over language use it to get political power, with the result that the ideal of democratic government is never achieved."

In the last few decades those countries that were under colonial rule have gained independence and are

now reorganizing (what they inherited from the past) the political, economic and social structures. The linguistic policy of the past has to be evaluated and new language policy planning will gain impetus. Most notable examples are African countries. (see Heugh 1995:329-350) South Africa has been the most recent addition to the newly formed democracies of the world.

In South Africa during the apartheid era and even before that, the political power was in the hands of the 'white' European community. The Europeans were also immigrants who came to South Africa in the seventeenth century and were a minority to the native African population. Pachai(1979:1) writes that,

"Participation by persons other than of European descent in the full political life of South Africa, or in any part of that country, has either been totally denied or very severely curtailed from as way back as the seventeenth century"

As a result of the political power being in the hands of the Europeans, they were accepted as the 'elite' even if some of the members were economically weak, and their languages English and Afrikaans became 'power' languages. After 1948, when the National Party came into power, both these languages became 'official' languages of South Africa. On this subject Pool(1993) cites Myers-Scotton(1989) who defines "elite closure",

'a tactic of boundary maintenance: it involves institutionalizing the linguistic patterns of the elite, either through official policy or informally-established usage norms. This limits access to socioeconomic mobility and political power to those societal members who

possess the requisite linguistic patterns of the elite.'

Although South Africa is a multilingual country the official language policy in South Africa has been interwoven with the politics of domination and separate development. The official languages of the state (first English and then Afrikaans) have been elevated and other languages have been either suppressed or marginalised. Language oppression has brought about revolts especially by Blacks against Afrikaans which was seen as the language of the oppressor. The Indian languages, being the immigrant minority languages, were always marginalised.

Since the first democratic election in South Africa's history in 1994,, debates on language policy issues are still continuing. Eleven official languages have been recognised and entrenched in the new constitution. The eleven official languages comprise two former official languages, English and Afrikaans and nine regional African languages. A Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) has been established to promote all the languages and create conditions for the development of all official and some indigenous languages.

Other non-official languages commonly used by communities in South Africa such as German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu have also been accorded recognition in the constitution. Languages used for religious purposes Arabic, Hebrew and Sanskrit have also been included. The PANSALB must promote and ensure respect for these languages. At the moment the state and PANSALB are only concerned with the official indigenous languages.

This appears to be similar to the complex linguistic situation in India where Hindi is the official

language and fifteen other state languages have been recognised in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. English which was widespread during the colonial rule is still running parallel to Hindi, although it was to have been superseded by Hindi fifteen years after the promulgation of the constitution.

The Government of National Unity considering the linguistic diversity of South Africa, has recognised and accepted a multilingual policy in South Africa. This commitment to multilingualism has been lauded and commended by all stakeholders. However this policy requires extensive language planning and is not going to be an easy task to implement. There is no clear state policy for minority languages and the minority groups fear being marginalised by the hegemony of the declared official languages.

O'Barr (1976:5) describes three important categories of relationship between language and politics. The first is in which government intervenes in an attempt to control the communication system; secondly, those situations in which language factors intervene and attempt the process of politics and government to control the communication system and lastly, those situations in which the first and second categories are in mutual interaction.

The first situation describes the apartheid era of South Africa where Afrikaners monopolised political power and determined that the Afrikaans language would be their national symbol. In another situation the grass root mobilisation of French speaking Canadians through the Official Languages Act of 1967 which made both French and English official languages, is worthy of attention. Presently the South African government is consulting people at all levels through the PANSALB but whether it will serve as merely an advisory body to the government is not quite clear.



#### 4.3 ECONOMIC POWER

Economic aspirations of a migrant minority community are by far the most salient factors leading to language shift. When a group of minority language speakers have a relatively low economic status there is a strong tendency to shift towards the majority dominant language. (Appel & Muysken 1987) English in South Africa is used for wider communication in the occupational situation, official government services, trade and business, commercial transactions, education, technology and sciences. In discussing the status of the English language, Aziz (1988:45) finds that English exerted influence on the Indians politically and socio-economically.

Most parents had poor command of the English language and therefore urged their children to learn and speak English. They associated speaking English with academic achievement and economic progress. Economic status has proved to be a prominent factor in nearly all studies of LMLS amongst immigrant communities in South Africa. (cf. Aziz 1989; Mesthrie 1991 (Bhojpuri); Prabhakaran 1991 (Telugu); Desai 1992 (Gujarati); Murugan 1994 (Tamil); Barnes & McDuling 1995 (Portuguese); de Kadt 1995 (German)).

Kuper (1960:60) noted that the Gujaratis belong to the higher income group (Durban 1951 census) by which they acquired higher socio-economic status. They have been referred to as the 'Indian elite'. The Gujaratis came from a higher economic echelon in India. They had a higher degree of mother-tongue education and less than a working knowledge of English. Large landowners formed a distinct elite with a few Hindus and more Muslim Gujaratis. The majority of them owned small retail businesses and a few wealthy businessmen were wholesalers.

The Indian businessmen employed mainly Indians and then too, from their own linguistic and family circles. This practice enabled them to continue using their mother tongue on business premises. Mr P.V.L (#19) said, "The sons of wealthy businessmen inherited the business and were secure but it seemed to last mostly up to three generations. The sons who took over the father's businesses also had to obtain better qualification in their field due to a strong competition from other linguistic groups, now the elite from the indentured group, and racial groups."

Thereafter the younger generation concentrated on education (through English medium) and sought professions which brought in more stable incomes and prestige and dignity in the affluent class. The South African Gujaratis are spread across a wide spectrum of educational qualifications and professions. (see Table 4.1) Special issues of community brochures elaborate on the achievements of their members. Some of the families sent their sons to Britain and India to pursue medical or legal studies. When they came back after completing studies they were seen as role models.

There are marked economic pressures generating bilingualism and shift to English. Very seldom would one come across job opportunities with Gujarati language requirements not only in the local newspaper but also in an Indian newspaper. The only one that came to notice was in the "Indian Opinion" when it needed an editor who was proficient in Gujarati language. Holmes & Hoffman (1991) list Economics as a factor contributing to Language Shift." In a country where good job opportunities favour the use of the dominant language communities abandon their mother tongue in favour of the dominant language". Murugan (1994:134) quotes a Tamil respondent "it is a passport to financial stability." This points to the phenomenon

of language shift dictated by elements beyond the community control.

**TABLE 4.1**

**OCCUPATION OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THEIR ANCESTORS BY PERCENTAGE**

Occupation	1st Ancestor's Occupation in India	1st Ancestor's Occupation in South Africa	Occupation of Respondent
Professional Educational Medical, etc.	7.7	3.0	30.5
Business	13.4	41.3	28.9
Sales insurance	0.7	13.8	2.7
Artisan	37.3	27.5	0.5
Farmer	26.1	1.8	0.0
Gujarati teacher	0.0	0.6	2.7
Housewife, student	4.2	1.8	21.9

Table 4.1 shows remarkable changes in occupational patterns from the first generation Gujaratis (born in India) and the current generation. (4th and 5th). Let us examine these changes.

1. The current generation is moving away from business and there is a 12.4% decrease in this field. Instead, as mentioned earlier, there is a tremendous increase in the professional sector from 7,7% to 30.5%.

2. 26.1% of the ancestors were farmers in India but none of their children in this sample have reported farming as their occupation. The probable reason for this is that initially they could not afford to buy

land. When they accumulated capital their interests lay in business, not agriculture. The restrictive Anti-Asiatic laws of the colony also became inhibiting factors.

3. A great number of artisans (occupations based on caste) immigrated and continued in this field but it is evident from the sample that their children have given up their parents occupation.

4. The most interesting figures on the table are those of the student and housewife: a low percentage of 4.2% in the first ancestor's column in this category indicate hardly any housewives came with their husbands. Then there is a significant increase to 21.9% student/housewife in the present generation. Very few respondents are students in this sample. Therefore what has been recorded in many history books (Bhana 1990 and Kuper 1960) that no wives had accompanied the first 'passenger' Indians has been substantiated by these figures.

5. Teachers of the Gujarati language in India earn a very low income. Therefore they would have not have been able to pay the passage to South Africa. They made an appearance much later in the 1930's when the community organisations 'imported' them and paid their travel costs and employed them to teach in their vernacular schools.

With respect to Scots Gaelic Mesthrie (1994) cites Thomso (1981)" that the exodus of people from the Scottish highlands in search of work in English speaking areas in the nineteenth century was a key factor in its eventual decline. Economic factors thus counteracted the efforts of the Gaelic Schools Society in fostering stable Gaelic-English bilingualism."

The indentured Indians in Guyana continued to maintain Hindi upto 1920 when Hindi - English bilingualism

existed. At the same time English was gaining greater importance for vertical mobility and Indian parents could not remain unaffected. Without English they could not compete (for opportunities) on the nation scale. ( Satyanath 1994).

The forgoing demonstrates how Scots Gaelic and Hindi in Guyana yielded place to English because of its economic power. Gujarati in South Africa underwent similar economic pressure in spite of earlier attempts to maintain it in the business place.

#### **4.4 DEMOGRAPHICS**

The geographic distribution of members of a minority group generally determines LMLS in a community. It is recorded that as long as speakers of a given language are concentrated in a certain area there are better chances of maintaining their language: French-speaking Canadians are concentrated in Quebec where French is a vital language, and in other parts where they are dispersed there is a tendency to shift from French to English. Appel & Muysken(1987:36).

Moreover, the number of speakers of a minority language compared to the majority numbers of a dominant language can affect LMLS. The smaller the size of a community, the stronger is the threat of Language shift. For number of speakers of Gujarati in South Africa, see Table 2.1 in chapter 2. There are more Gujarati speakers in the Transvaal and the Cape compared to Natal. Following this, it has been generally observed that there is greater communication in Gujarati amongst the Transvaal speakers of the language.

From the very beginning of the Gujarati- speakers settlement in South Africa they were concentrated in

urban areas of each province. They remained a tight-knit community; and this actually contributed to the maintenance of their language and culture. If one walks down the Victoria Street and Grey Street areas, including the Indian Market in Durban, one is sure to be reminded of the 'Chinatown' of Chinese Americans. The same would be true of 'Oriental Plaza' in Johannesburg and former parts of 'District Six' in Cape Town. In these areas (Chinatown etc.) where close-knit communities are found, their languages have been maintained to a great extent. The Gujarati language has survived more than three generations in such places.

After the Group Areas Act of 1950, which affected to a greater extent the Indian community, settled communities were uprooted and dispersed. They were relocated outside the urban areas in suburbs and this separated the speakers of a particular language and put them together with speakers of other Indian languages. Their ethnicity was threatened and as a result there has been more integration within the Indian linguistic groups, though the maintenance of each language has diminished. They generally adopted English as the medium of communication.

#### **4.5 SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES**

In determining Language Maintenance and Language Shift sociolinguists need to ask many questions relating to what has been done in the past for the retention of the language and how that has influenced in the present situation. Edwards (1985:47) has cited Drake (1984) on this issue. He observed in connection with LMLS in the United states that, " the best predictor of future social behaviour is past social behaviour, all other things being equal". Assessment of the socio-linguistic situation can be useful to predict

LMLS. Specific questions, as suggested below, need to be asked to elicit answers relating to cultural and linguistic factors that enhance maintenance.

- 1 What are the attitudes and loyalty of the speakers of the language to language and culture
- 2 What is their relative degrees of proficiency in the language
- 3 Which are the strong domains in which the language is spoken and if it has been weakened, is there any specific domain
- 4 What role the family and community have played in language maintenance
- 5 To what extent has the language been transmitted from generation to generation
- 6 Where is the language learned - at home, school, elsewhere
- 7 What are the current efforts of the speakers for its continued survival
- 8 Links with the old country where it is spoken
- 9 what are the opportunities for education in English language and culture

It has emerged from this research that while Gujarati is a minority language in South Africa, English is the dominant language. As far as use of a common language within the Indian community of South Africa was concerned, no one Indian language could serve as a language of communication. English dominated all the Indian languages. Speaking of the role of English in the Indian community Mesthrie (1995:119) says "English was in the end able to fulfil this role of 'horizontal' communication as well as of 'vertical' communication with the ruling class". Thus the Indian languages, including Gujarati, were marginalized. Yet each linguistic group of the Indian community has been able to secure a niche in the mosaic of the South African multilingual society, finding their relevance in certain domains.

In addition over the space of time new developments have posed further questions about bilingualism, multilingualism, diglossia, code switching and other factors relating to language contact. No single cause can explain LMLS. It involves a variety of factors in each situation which act as variables in predicting LMLS.

#### **4.5.1 LANGUAGE LOYALTY**

Language loyalty is expressed when a community makes efforts to preserve its language by encouraging its study in the older generation (if they had missed learning the language due to adverse circumstances e.g. no Gujarati school in the area) and teaching it to younger generations to ensure continuity. Secondly, loyalty is evinced when they try to protect it from change which is perceived as robbing it of its purity. (Rayfield 1970:30).

Language loyalty in the case of Gujarati is more pronounced than with other Indian immigrant languages. Mr. N.V. (#1) said, "The Gujarati community spent more money for their mother tongue education compared to other language groups of the Indian community even when the others could afford it."

In the early years there were many Gujarati intellectuals who worked for the preservation of the language. In the recent years the number has diminished and this has placed the language in jeopardy. The interviewees were asked what they thought about the future of Gujarati. Most of them stated that it is doomed to extinction. Yet when one reads an "annual" or a special issue of a magazine of the Gujarati community in South Africa language, loyalty is clearly expressed. The chairperson of Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir, Lenasia wrote in its Sixtieth



Anniversary Brochure (1996) " Our language, culture and religion should be a source of pride and deserve a far greater degree of cultivation and development. Our endeavours to this end can succeed only with the co-operation of the entire community." Their sense of commitment finds resonance in findings of researchers; e.g. Rosenthal (1975:41) found that "Gujarati speaking Indians have preserved their vernacular to a far greater extent than the other, and Gujarati Hindus more so than the Gujarati Moslems".

Rosenthal had carried out research in the Gujarati community in Johannesburg and she recorded that according to 1960 census 46% of Johannesburg Indians spoke Gujarati as their home language, 19% spoke English, 9.3% spoke Hindi, 5.1% Tamil 5% Urdu 4.9% Afrikaans and 10% other languages.

One of the questions asked of the Gujarati community in this survey was, **"Which of these do you consider as your mother tongue today?"** Table 4.2 gives the responses.

**TABLE 4.2**  
**MOTHER TONGUE OF RESPONDENTS**

<b>GUJARATI</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>73.5%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>5%</b>

The response was **73.5%** claimed **Gujarati**, **15.9% English**, 5% other and 7.9% Both (which was not given as an option), as their mother tongue and 2.1% did not respond. This question was particularly asked because of the increased number of English speakers in the community as stated by Bughwan (1979). A considerable number admitted that English is now their mother

tongue. Perhaps the definition of mother tongue now has to change as remarked by many sociolinguists.

A question following the above was "**Which language do you use most?**" 88.9% of the respondents claimed to **use** mostly the **English** language and only 23.8% claimed that they **use** mostly **Gujarati**. Although using mostly English, the above 73.5% respondents show their loyalty to Gujarati.

The above figures were compared to those of Tamil speakers (Murugan 1994:145). The Tamil community although a minority in the South African context is proportionately the largest in the Indian community of South Africa. The majority of the Tamil speakers came as indentured labourers to Natal. In Murugan's study only 20% of the respondents claimed **Tamil** to be their mother tongue and 78.9% claimed **English** as their mother tongue which is quite the reverse of Gujarati. The Gujarati language has been maintained to a greater extent than any other Indian language in South Africa. (Aziz 1988, Mesthrie 1991, Prabhakaran 1991, Desai 1992 and Murugan 1994 for research on Indian languages in South Africa.)

The daughter of one of the interviewees expressed her loyalty to Gujarati when I met her recently. She is a young graduate in architecture. She wished to write out her invitation for her marriage in Gujarati and English. She was to marry a non-Gujarati and a non-Hindu. She had obtained a standard seven Gujarati education at a local school. She was quite confident about the Gujarati words she wanted to use in the invitation even though I had suggested alternate ones. She expressed her concern about the spoken and written form of Gujarati in South Africa. The people were more familiar with the spoken form than the written form because they hardly read Gujarati books. She felt that if we wrote as we spoke it would make it easier for

all, and the Gujarati language would be used widely. I couldn't agree with her more on the subject; but I wanted to know why she so particular about the language in the card. She said that it was the right thing to do. Which is why the Gujaratis continue to speak and write the standard variety. Maintenance of a "standard" is probably perceived as the best way to preserve the language.

#### **4.5.2 STANDARDISATION**

"Standardisation refers to a language's range of acceptance and its association with a set of regulations which govern 'correct' usage." (Preston 1989:200). Garvin (1993:44) notes that "a standard language serves above all for the cultural and intellectual communication of a speech community and allows it to use its own language to deal with these important domains."

Although there are regional and caste based varieties of Gujarati, the standard language used in education, literature and mass media is understood by everyone. The standard variety has formed a link through publications in the diaspora. The Gujarati dictionary endorsed by Mahatma Gandhi and published by Gujarat Vidyapith, a university institution founded by Gandhi, has played a major role in the standardisation process of the Gujarati language. Bourdieu (1994:48) says that, "the dictionary is the exemplary result of this labour of codification and normalisation."

#### **4.5.3 LANGUAGE ATTITUDES**

A language unifies the speakers it serves and especially if they are monolingual it creates a sense of loyalty and pride. Positive attitudes to a language

can reinforce the learning and usage of a language. Once the monolingual steps out of his boundary and begins to experience the advantages of learning another variety, the unifying force of the language weakens and the attitude moves to the centre of the continuum which weakens the loyalty.

Negative attitudes are derived from the social status of a language and its association in peoples minds. Unfortunately these negative attitudes have pedagogical associations. In the government schools in South Africa where Gujarati is offered as a subject in the curriculum it is not treated as an examination subject like the other school subjects. Therefore the educators display a negative attitude towards it and the pupils in turn also adopt a negative attitude and are either indifferent to it or totally ignore it. The result is that very few pupils choose to study Gujarati.

Regarding the **attitudes** of the respondents and the spouses towards the Gujarati language, **96.8%** and **91.3%** respectively, indicated that they were proud of it. 97.8% of the respondents were excited, very happy or happy when they heard the Gujarati language being spoken. Although most of them displayed a positive attitude towards Gujarati being spoken 55.1%, indicated that they were disappointed when Gujarati was not spoken by a Gujarati. This indicates that the Gujarati speakers are now beginning to accept language shift and excuse those who do not communicate in the Gujarati language.

Although the parents may be failing to transmit the Gujarati language to their children (as will be seen later), their current attitudes are favourable as noted by the overwhelming 'yes' response of **99.5%** to the question, **"Do you think it is important to keep Gujarati alive in South Africa?"**

On this issue Edwards (1985:51) cites Fishman(1964) who reported that "as original varieties become more and more restricted in use, attitudes towards them actually become more favourable." Edwards writes that one must be cautioned by favourable attitudes expressed by speakers without practical action. The committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (1975) found that "strong sentimental attachments to Irish were not accompanied by language use, nor by desire to actively promote it, nor by optimism concerning its future, among the population at large."

There is a popular couplet which I'm sure the Gujaratis are familiar with, which places value on **effort** rather than mere desire:

કામ સરે ઉદ્યોગથી, મનોરથે નવ થાય,  
સૂતા સિહના મુખ વિશે હરણ ન પેસી જાય.

Only by effort can a task be accomplished,  
Not so by wishful thinking.  
A deer will not enter a sleeping lion's  
mouth (even though being powerful a lion  
has to hunt his prey, i.e. make an effort)

#### 4.5.4 PROFICIENCY

The degree of proficiency is very important in a linguistic group if the speakers desire to continue communication in that language. A higher degree of proficiency will ensure habitual use of the language. Firstly, the respondents and their spouses (parents of the children in the survey) were asked about their proficiency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding the language. Then they were questioned about the ability of their oldest and youngest child

in the language. With regard to their ability, this skill was subdivided into three categories ranging from maximum to minimal competence 'very well', 'fairly well' and 'not at all.' Table 4.3.1 has the data elicited from the questionnaires.

**TABLE 4.3.1**

**Proficiency of the Parents in the Gujarati Language by Percentage**

		<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Spouse</b>
<b>SPEAK</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>44.0</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>54.8</b>	<b>49.1</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>6.9</b>
<b>READ</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>35.5</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>42.0</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>22.5</b>
<b>WRITE</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>30.7</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>42.8</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>26.5</b>
<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>58.0</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>38.1</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.4</b>

Their **understanding** of the language rates very high since only **3%** reported that they did not understand at all. The respondents, **96.3%** and their spouses **93.7%** are fairly well (includes very well) proficient in **speaking** the Gujarati language. They are less proficient in **reading and writing**. On average **16.5%** respondents and spouses could **not read at all**. The lowest rating was found in the **writing** of the language when on average **21.8%** respondents and spouses replied that they could **not write at all**. At this stage, all other things being equal, **10.6%** (calculated from the speaking ability) would not be able to transmit the language at all to the next generation. These figures

substantiate the claim that Gujarati is proportionately still the most spoken Indian language in South Africa. (cf. Tamil language - Murugan 1994 and Telugu language - Prabhakaran 1991)

It is often observed that older children in first immigration families are more proficient in the ethnic mother tongue (EMT) than their younger siblings. Almost all the interviewees agreed with this. This claim seems to be supported by the data elicited in this research. There may be several explanations for this phenomenon. The parents explained that in an extended family their first born had constant contact with the grandparents who were Gujarati monolinguals. Therefore they had more opportunities to speak Gujarati with their grandparents. With the passage of time the family had moved to separate households because of lack of space in the home due to the expanding joint family and their offspring did not have the same opportunity to use the mother tongue. In some cases the grandparents were deceased.

It was also observed that the parents had greater control over the language input of the first-born who are less affected by their unfamiliar outgroup linguistic behaviour. Their younger siblings tend to interact more with the outgroup children.

The following table 4.3.2 gives the childrens' proficiency elicited in the same the questionnaire survey.

TABLE 4.3.2

**Proficiency of the children in the Gujarati Language  
by Percentage**

		<b>Oldest child</b>	<b>Youngest child</b>
<b>SPEAK</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>66.9</b>	<b>66.4</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>30.6</b>
<b>READ</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>56.6</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>38.8</b>
<b>WRITE</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>4.7</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>50.7</b>	<b>48.0</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>47.2</b>
<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>10.1</b>
	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>79.0</b>
	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>10.9</b>

In the above table there is a distinct drop in the level of proficiency in all the given categories of speaking, reading, writing and understanding of the oldest to the youngest child in the Gujarati language. When compared with the parents ability in the same categories there is a wider gap between the parents and the children. In reviewing the '**not at all**' category **20%** of the respondents claimed that their oldest child could not speak Gujarati at all and in contrast **30.6%** claimed that their youngest child could not speak at all. The **reading and writing** abilities in '**not at all**' further decreased to **28.8%** and **33.6%** respectively in the oldest child and **38.8%** and **47.2%** respectively in the youngest child. These analyses have sufficiently proved that the oldest child is more proficient than the youngest child. It also suggests that there is a generation shift in process in the Gujarati language in South Africa.



#### 4.5.5. DIGLOSSIA

Schiffman (1993:115) explains that "Diglossic languages and diglossic language situations are usually described as consisting of two (or more) varieties that co-exist in a linguistic culture and share the domains of linguistic behaviour in a kind of complementary distribution." In view of this definition the Gujarati language in South Africa does seem to be in a diglossic situation. The two languages or 'varieties' (concerned with this study) that do co-exist and share the domains of linguistic behaviour are Gujarati, an Indian immigrant language, and English also an immigrant language but a language considered as a 'lingua franca' being a language of wider communication spoken by almost all the ethnolinguistic groups.

Mesthrie (1995:251) states that English was transmitted to Indians by way of: "(a) schooling, with teachers being native speakers of English; (b) schooling, with teachers being non-native speakers of English; (c) contact with native speakers of English in Natal (d) contact with non-native speakers of English (chiefly Indians)." In addition some of the 'passenger' Indians had attended English convents in colonial India and had gained elementary knowledge of English. Mr. C.C.P.(#4) explained that though the parents sent them to Gujarati medium schools they chose those that also offered English as a subject in the curriculum.

Schiffman(1993:116) says, "When the two varieties are recognised (or tacitly accepted) to be genetically related, the H (high) domains are usually reserved for more conservative form of the language, which is usually the written form and literary dialect". The L(low) variety is used for informal settings. It is clear that Gujarati and English would not fit into

this type of diglossic situation where both languages are unrelated and both can be attributed to a 'High' variety.

Fishman(1970) introduced the notion that diglossia could be extended to situations found in many societies where forms of two *genetically unrelated* languages occupy the H and L niches. One language (H) may be used for religious, educational, literary and other such prestigious domains, while another language is employed for informal, primarily spoken domains.

I would argue that the concept of High and Low poses a problem to the sensitive issues of language. High and Low are terms generally used in class distinction and High will be regarded as powerful and prestigious. Low will be regarded as unimportant and less valuable. If religious domain be regarded as High, then since Gujarati is used in temples and religious discourses (Morari Bapu gave a ten day discourse in standard Gujarati (in Louis Trichardt in May 1997) from the Hindu scriptures therefore Gujarati must be regarded a High variety. But what of English? English is used by Gujaratis in education, legal domain, government offices and in general conversation. Then can English be regarded as Low variety? Both these genetically unrelated languages are used in 'High' domains and regarded as High variety but serve separate domains.

I would therefore suggest that they are in a diglossic situation (as described in the next section) where each is used in a separate domain (sometimes used together) and probably serve as complementary to one another.

#### **4.5.6 DOMAINS OF LANGUAGE USAGE**

Romaine (1991:144) in discussing the domain theory writes "The domain approach to language maintenance

may be traced back to a conception of the relationship between 'stable bilingualism' and separation of the two languages into distinct domains of social interaction (sometimes termed 'bilingualism with diglossia'), attributed to Fishman.

It has been reported by many sociolinguists that diglossia situations tend to be unstable though there may be exceptions. Lack of stability may be due to the power one language may exert over the other. This may lead to language shift. Sometimes diglossia may be stable but the domains reserved for one variety or other may vary. The domains of a particular variety can change. The failure to use one's mother tongue in a domain reserved for it poses a danger for mother tongue shift. The minutes previously taken at many committee meetings in Gujarati are now taken in English because the members are less proficient in writing the Gujarati language than speaking it. (refer chapter 3)

There is no universal rule(s) applicable to all speech communities regarding the distribution of varieties in a society. The number and nature of domains are determined by the functions performed by the varieties within the society.

People may select a particular variety (language) because it makes it easier to discuss a particular topic regardless of where they are talking. At home, (a domain generally reserved for mother tongue Gujarati), people may discuss their work using the language (English) associated with that domain. Since we may rarely see stable bilingualism, there is no certainty that a language may remain 'protected' in a given domain.

In most minority communities the ethnic language has not had the opportunity to secure domains in the

political or economic sector, but holds a strong position in the social settings and particularly informal domains such as home and in family interaction and with friends. In the sample survey of Gujarati language in South Africa questions were asked (through a questionnaire) about **where** and with **whom** the language is used to determine the domains. The following analysis elicited interesting results.

A question was asked 'which language/s do you speak at home?' **99.3%** acknowledged they speak **Gujarati** and respondents of the same sample **99.4%** speak **English** at home. The respondents had more than one choice of crossing the boxes in the given table. The figures from the current sample represent a bilingual Gujarati community. By bilingualism it is understood that a person is fluent in both the languages. Yet it represents an unstable biligualism since in the next question 'which language do you **use** most?', the response was 88.9% mostly used English (used in most domains represented by their occupations) and only 23.8% said that they mostly use Gujarati (used in fewer domains).

The stronger domain for communication in the Gujarati language is the ethnic community. 11.3% said they communicated all the time, 50.0% often and 34.9% sometimes with members of their community. Only 2.7% did not communicate at all in Gujarati in the community.

The Gujarati language is not **used** with everyone, especially because of its minority status, in a multilingual society. The following tables indicate the percentage of Gujarati speakers from the sample who are able to interact and communicate with other Gujarati speakers and claiming the domains of Gujarati in the community.

**Table 4.4**

**Respondents' communication practice in Gujarati by percentage with group members**

<b>Elder members of community</b>	<b>94.2</b>
<b>Peers</b>	<b>48.7</b>
<b>Friends</b>	<b>58.7</b>
<b>Gujarati school teacher</b>	<b>46.6</b>
<b>Fellow workers</b>	<b>10.1</b>
<b>Shopkeepers</b>	<b>18.5</b>
<b>Religious personnel</b>	<b>75.1</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>7.4</b>

The data summarised from the table are important in that they show opportunities for using the mother tongue with members of family, friends and the community. The minority Gujarati speakers have maintained the language in the domestic domain perpetuated by the elder members of the community. They do so for separating the home from the public life.

Mr. Y.M.(#37) remembers that their elders did not know any other language besides Gujarati when they came to Durban. His father always read the Koran in Gujarati and later presented it to Mahatma Gandhi. The majority of them were 'Surti Musalmaan' and a few were Katchi Memons who came from Kathiawad. They wrote in the Gujarati script. Then there were the Gujarati speaking Vohras. Only the Kokanis wrote in the Urdu script.

There is a low 10.1% of people speaking Gujarati to fellow workers, and 18.5% to shopkeepers. Although the minority may continue to use the mother tongue in the family domain they acquire the common language of job security, viz. English. In the work place there is no room for the use of one's ethnic tongue. A slightly

higher percentage noted with the shopkeepers indicate that Gujaratis shop in the familiar Gujarati vicinity.

Peers and friends in the Gujarati community form a group with whom they can share their experiences and discuss daily matters and use both languages (i.e. Gujarati and English) as the topic of the conversation demands. A group of friends were discussing the degree of violence in their area and were speaking in English. Then a friend joined them and told them a joke in Gujarati. The conversation then changed to Gujarati, no doubt steered by the humour which everybody enjoyed.

Speaking in Gujarati with a teacher of Gujarati language is a subconscious act. When the parent brings the child to Gujarati school he/she is speaking to the child in English yet as soon as the parent encounters a teacher the conversation changes to Gujarati.

Maintenance of the Gujarati language is attributed to 'ethnic group' factors, social ties and kinship relationships. These data are significant in that they indicate a high degree of social interaction which often results in the use of the mother tongue in separate domains. Although 75.7% of respondents reported using Gujarati at **Home** almost 24% have been lost from this domain to which all the respondents belong.

Table 4.5

**Domains of Gujarati Language Usage by Percentage of Gujarati Speakers in the sample**

Home	75.7
Cultural meetings -festivals	64.6
Prayer gatherings	80.4
Gujarati school functions	47.1
Family gatherings	77.2
Eisteddfods	24.3
Committee meetings	25.9
Temple, Church, Mosque	66.1
Other	5.3

n=189

In the 1977 annual report of the Natal Gujarati Parishad it was stated that the response of the community to the **eisteddfods** has been so overwhelming that we would have to hire larger halls like the Durban City Hall to accommodate the participants and audience. 24.3% recorded in the above data indicates a huge loss of interest in this domain. If this domain is weakened there is no indication of linguistic repertoire within the community.

In the Durban area, in Natal, the Gujaratis are located in the suburbs and although they are not at a walking distance (it is an affluent class and have their own transport) they get together at weekends and even on weekdays, if there is a **religio-cultural** festival. Members look forward to these opportunities as noted by their attendance in large numbers.

In Transvaal and Cape provinces the government's apartheid policy kept the Gujarati speakers together. They lived closely knit in the urban areas even before the enforced segregation laws of the government. After

the Group Areas Act the Indians were moved to a specially demarcated area where they were 'bunched' together. Therefore they were able to attend all the **social events** arranged by their local community organisations and remained an exclusive ethnic community.

One Muslim Gujarati, Mr.A.A.(#35) said "We meet at birthday parties where we are happy to communicate in Gujarati with Hindu and Parsee friends. These are few opportunities we get to converse in Gujarati. **Family gatherings** (77.2%) serve as an important domain for communication in the ethnic mother tongue.

The above list of domains where a large percentage of respondents indicated using the mother tongue, represents a strong domain for use of mother tongue. However, where a low percentage is recorded it cannot be concluded that there is a shift in progress since there is no indication that all the respondents are associated with that domain. For example, all the respondents may not have school going children where an opportunity to speak with the teacher may arise. Yet it is important to note that "Where more than one language is used in the same domain (with the same people talking about the same sort of things) this hypothesis predicts language shift".(Romaine 1991:145)

The religious domain which claims a high percentage of Gujarati speakers will be discussed separately under the heading 'Religion'.(see in this chapter 4.5.10)

#### **4.5.7 LINK WITH MOTHER COUNTRY**

Gujarati families in South Africa have very strong links with India and especially with Gujarat. These links are maintained by regular letters to family and friends, visits to their villages or 'gaam' as



indicated by Rosenthal (1976:54-56). People also maintain links because of land and property inherited by them in Gujarat.

In the early years when the Gujarati traders had no intention to settle in South Africa they often visited their families in India. They also took their children with them, if they were planning to spend a longer time in India, to continue their schooling in the Gujarati medium. They had obtained domicile rights in South Africa after three years and they were granted travel documents for a period of three years.

Persistence of caste practice among the Gujaratis forced them to take their children to India for marriage. There was a shortage of members of their own caste in South Africa. Most of the community publications report the difficulties experienced by them in arranging their children's marriages. The Immigration Amendment Act of 1953 affected mostly the Gujaratis since it prohibited the entry of brides from India. One Muslim interviewee said that the Hindu Gujaratis were more affected than Muslims since they (Hindus) were smaller in number.

Many families frequently visited India but Indian citizens were restricted from coming to South Africa. Now that the apartheid era is over and sanctions lifted, friends and families are able to visit South Africa for the first time. There is once more a "free flow" of brides, who would impart the Gujarati language to their children, into the country and once again new links are being established with Gujarat.

With the lifting of the cultural boycott by India following the restoration of improved cultural relationships, the Gujaratis are inviting many artists in the field of music and drama, and renowned orators of religious scriptures to provide for the needs of the Gujarati community.

#### 4.5.8 MASS MEDIA

##### 4.5.8.1 NEWSPAPERS IN GUJARATI

For politically well organised minority groups minority languages serve as vehicles of expression. The Indian weekly newspaper '**The Indian Opinion**' was established in 1903 encouraged by MK Gandhi. Swan (1985:57) wrote, " The decision to start an Indian newspaper had been made as early as 1896 during the first flush of enthusiasm for organised politics." "Indian Opinion" served to keep the Indians informed of the Indian political activities in Natal and Transvaal.

Pachai(1963:24) wrote "The Indian community welcomed the advent of the paper". Most of the time the paper faced financial difficulties and for some time, at least, while he was in South Africa, Gandhi himself contributed substantial amounts to meet the expenses. Pachai(1963:30) found that only the *Times of Natal* commented on the launch of the first Indian newspaper and welcomed the appearance of a newspaper which voiced Indian views.

The paper started with sections in the English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil languages but by 1906 only English and Gujarati languages continued. On this Swan (1985) comments that this move represented the underlying reality of the gap between the elite Gujaratis and indentured labourers. There is another point, concerning the discontinuation of Tamil and Hindi in the "Indian Opinion", that I would like to add. Although the members of the Tamil and Hindi communities had a high proficiency rate in **speaking** their languages they were less proficient in **reading and writing** the languages. Hence, it is logical that there would be few readers of items in these languages. India had a very high illiteracy rate and

the indentured labourers belonging to the low socio-economic group did not have the opportunity to learn reading and writing. Therefore it was probably a 'demand and supply' situation since the newspaper continued to be published upto 1962 (when it was ceased publication) and claimed a fair number of readers speaking the Gujarati language. About the purpose of the Gujarati language in Indian Opinion Pachai(1963:75) stated "In its Gujarati columns, which most traders who did not know English read,..". This confirms the purpose and need of continuing the publication in Gujarati.

Besides political news the paper encouraged the readers and organisations to submit articles of relevance and interest to the Indian community. Many societies contributed such articles e.g. the establishment of The Surat Hindu Association in 1907. The Gujarati section of the paper carried political, economic and social reports. Not only did it give news of the local events but it also kept the readers informed of overseas events, especially those of India. The last of its edition was in September 1962.

In 1914 **Indian Views**, a weekly paper, started by M V Anglia was also published in English and Gujarati. It was said to have been established because Indian Opinion did not give adequate coverage to news concerning the Muslim community. It carried advertisements in both the Gujarati and English languages. Political and social events in South Africa and foreign countries (mainly Islamic) were reported. Mr.Y.M.(#37) explained that in the early years Gujarati newspapers such as *Vohra Samachar* and *Muslim Gujarat* were obtained by the Gujarati Muslims from India since most of them could only read in Gujarati. Mr.I.K.(#39) said that many Muslim families still subscribe to these papers. It became difficult to obtain them due to unreliable postage facilities and

the Indian Views filled this void. Twenty years later Indian Views was taken over by sociologist Fatima Meer's father Ismail Moosa Meer.

Another Gujarati newspaper ***Al Islam*** owned privately by Osman Ahmed was started in 1907. It was an Islamic paper and the news focused mainly on religious happenings in Islamic countries, though political and social news were not excluded. This paper lasted for only two years.

All the above Gujarati newspapers were published in Durban, Natal and were also distributed in the Transvaal and the Cape provinces. The language of the Indian Opinion was standard Gujarati but that of Indian Views and Al Islam was a dialect of the Muslims in which many words used were Hindustani and in many words the muted consonant was changed to a full consonant. Nevertheless the newspapers served as a tool to maintain the Gujarati language.

#### **4.5.8.2 MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS**

Besides the newspapers, numerous social publications in the Gujarati community helped to boost the language. Most of them were monthly and annual magazines and will be discussed in the chapter 6 on literature. There were a few significant publications which lasted only for a short time. Most of these publications were hand written since it was costly to print them and there was a shortage of Gujarati type sets. The renowned 'Lahri' press of East London was started by Lallo Hari. He published a large amount of material in Gujarati on religious and moral topics. Mr. K.J.(#3) reported that in the mid forties there were 4 to 6 page publications of high standard Gujarati: *Padakar* meaning challenge and *Chabuk* meaning whip, were distributed by anonymous writers. The

topics discussed related to social politics and targeted the social evils prevalent in the community.

Gujaratis of South Africa still subscribe to periodicals from Gujarat such as *Chitralkha*, *Janmabhumi* and *Navanit* and other religious literature. The links with the diaspora have introduced to them to weeklies like *Garvi Gujarat* and *Gujarat Samachar* and monthly *Opinion* from London, amongst others.

#### **4.5.8.3 Radio and Television**

Language shift to English was assisted by access to radio and electricity in the 1940's. National and Local Radio Stations (mostly government owned) broadcast mainly in the English language. The new generation was exposed less to their mother tongue and more to English. One of the first full time commercial radio station for Indians 'Radio Truro' started only in 1975. Affected by the restrictions in South Africa it was broadcast from Swaziland. The programmes were presented mainly in the English language except for the songs in the Indian languages that are spoken in South Africa.

Then in the 1980 South African Broadcasting Station (SABC), a government broadcaster, introduced weekly two hour programmes for Indians. Songs in Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Hindi and Urdu were aired. Each successive year a little more time was allotted and cultural and sports programmes were also introduced. In 1983 the SABC launched Radio Lotus, a special radio service for the Indian community. As in the past the number of hours allocated and the quality improved and presently this radio broadcasts twenty four hours a day. In 1995 Radio Lotus was under threat of being axed by the Independent Broadcasting Authority. "Save the Lotus" campaign proved successful and the station

was 'saved'. In spite of being a service for the Indian community the language used for broadcasting on the programme has always been English. Currently broadcasts are made in each Indian language once weekly for two hours. Although songs in the five Indian languages are played throughout the day, this has contributed very little to the learning of the language for its own sake.

**Television** in South Africa further promotes the use of the English language. Until the 1994 democratic elections the official languages English and Afrikaans enjoyed the facilities of television. There was very little room for Indian Languages due to the government policy. The time on television has now been proportionately allotted in terms of demographics. The situation has not changed for minority communities in the new dispensation. Satellite television programmes now provide the opportunity for Indian languages but few can afford these facilities.

Audio cassettes of Gujarati songs, bhajans and garbas are very popular and although they are not easily available at local stores due to a small demand people obtain them from India. Hindi songs and films are also popular among the Gujaratis.

#### **4.5.9 LIBRARIES AND BOOKS**

Reading has reinforced the spoken language and contributed to the maintenance of the standard language. In this context libraries have played a significant role in the Gujarati community. In all the centres where Gujarati schools have been established books for the students and teachers are housed in a school library. Furthermore, the community organisations in each area established a library to serve the community. Some of the old established

libraries such as the Gandhi Library in Durban and Patidar Library in Johannesburg had collections of thousands of books suitable for children and adults.

Many private libraries have served the community well since the books in these libraries were borrowed and returned by the readers in a proper, systematic fashion. In Durban the Mistri Library, Thakers' Library and Dr. NP Desai Library were very popular. In Transvaal the Swadhyaya Library established by Jivanjee, as late as 1983 houses 500 children's and 500 adults' literature books. The library of HN Arya houses a high standard of historical and literature books in Gujarati. Private collection also includes Babarbhair Chavada's library in Cape Town, Mohanlal Balasara's in Port Elizabeth and Lallo Harry's in East London. All these libraries contain over 500 books.

In the questionnaire sample survey the respondents were asked if they had any Gujarati books and if yes, what was the type of books and how often did they read the books. The response was as follows:

20.6% claimed they had 10 books  
22,2% claimed they had 20 books  
6.3% claimed they had 50 books  
3.2% claimed they had 100 books  
1.6% claimed they had 1000 books

The respondents do not read the books often enough and this contribute to the gradual loss of language. Only 19% claimed that they read the books often and 37.9% read sometimes, 17.2% rarely and 12.6% do not read at all.

It is indeed distressing that the community is losing its language despite having considerable resources

especially in the form of books, to keep Gujarati a vibrant language.

#### 4.5.10 RELIGION

Gujarati is a language of religion for the minority Hindu Gujarati community; therefore maintenance will be assured in this domain. In South Africa religious-cultural festivals are celebrated with great enthusiasm and zest throughout the year. Although the community is divided into various sects of Hinduism all the groups celebrate common Hindu festivals such as *Holi*, a spring festival; *Shivaratri* a festival devoted to Lord Shiva; Janmashtami, the celebration of Lord Krishna's birthday; and *Diwali*, the festival of lights, the victory of Rama over Ravana depicting conquest of good over evil.

In Durban an attempt has been made by the newly formed Gujarati Sanskriti Kendra to unite all the sections of the Hindu Gujarati community. Here festivals such as Holi, Navaratri and Diwali and the Gujarati New Year are celebrated under one banner. This has caused the attendance figures to increase. The priests who conduct the religious ceremonies use only the Gujarati language. In the Transvaal, The Transvaal Hindu Samaj and in the Cape Province, The Cape Hindu Cultural Society have made similar efforts to unite the local Gujarati organisations.

In the religious domain the Gujarati language is used by **75.1%** of respondents with **religious personnel** as indicated in the Table 4.4 in section 4.5.6. Domains of language use. In the next Table 4.5, **80.4%** indicated that they use Gujarati language at **religious gatherings** and **66.1%** used Gujarati in the **temple**. Compared to all the other domains which support the



use of the Gujarati language, the religious domain has been the strongest.

No community adheres more strictly to its religion than the Muslim community. Muslim businesses close at noon on Fridays and boys at school are allowed by authorities to attend the religious service in the mosque. At the beginning of the century the Quran was read in the Gujarati script and Gujarati language was taught in the *madressas*. Much has changed since the resurgence of Islam all over the world. Mr.Y.M. (#38)said, that Gujarati Muslims may use the Gujarati language in all other domains but Arabic is used for religious purposes. Nowadays English is used in the mosque to give instructions.

#### **4.5.10.1 BHAJAN FESTIVALS**

*Bhajan* is a devotional hymn in praise of a particular deity. The word 'bhaj' in Sanskrit means to worship. Bhajans are very popular in the Gujarati community of all sects. *Adi kavi*, (the first poet in the 14th century of the Gujarati language), Narsinh Mehta's bhajans are sung even today. His bhajan 'vaishnav jana to tene kahiye', a favourite of Mahatma Gandhi, has been popularised world-wide. *Bhajan mandals* (established groups who sing bhajans) exist in every town where Gujaratis are residents and regularly render their services at religious festivals. One of the reasons *Bhajan* is popular is that it is accompanied by music. Very recently the practice of inviting the groups to different towns has become very popular. The bhajan festivals attract a large crowd and the groups have begun to organise bhajan competitions. The language used in these activities is mostly Gujarati.

The Surat Arya Bhajan Mandal of Durban has been holding a twenty four hour non stop *bhajan* programme over eight days during the Krishnashtami week since 1956. The Mandal was established in 1926 and initially held weekly *bhajans*. Since then the Mandal's prime objective is to propagate religion and hold *bhajans* and *satsangs* and observe all religious festivals and preserve the Gujarati language.

The Transvaal based Swaminarayan Mandal regularly hosts *bhajan* festivals throughout the year. All the *bhajans* are sung in the Gujarati language. The Bhajan group of this mission is highly organised and render *bhajans* accompanied by a variety of Indian musical instruments.

Only a few of the *bhajan mandals* are cited above. In every town and city where there are Gujarati residents there is sure to be a *bhajan mandal* which serves the community. Like in the case of Islam there is a resurgence of Hinduism and *bhajan* groups are in contact with one another and are slowly forming a network throughout the country. Some members who cannot read the Gujarati script have the *bhajans* transliterated into English.

#### **4.5.10.2 INFLUENCE OF HINDU GUJARATI SECTS ON THE GUJARATI LANGUAGES**

Although all the Gujarati Hindus support the use of the Gujarati language in the religious domain, certain sects have very rigid rules in their propagation of religion. The *Swaminarayan Sampradaya* (mission) although numerically small, has regular organised *satsang* (get together for religious discourse) which is conducted in the standard Gujarati language at a local temple in Durban and Johannesburg. Children are exposed to the teachings of the *Guru* (Head) through

stories, dramas or bhajans in the Gujarati language. Their *guru* (highly respected teacher, the head of the mission) travels world-wide and preaches only in the Gujarati language. The followers in the diaspora, many of whom are professionals, accept the use of the Gujarati language without question and conduct the discourses in Gujarati. This practice has enforced the use of the mother tongue.

The above is an example of the religious domain where Gujarati is used. In the Hindu-Gujarati community there are other religious sects such as the Svadhyaya Mandal, Radhasaomi group, Sai group, Vaishnav group and others who extensively use Gujarati language in their *satsangs*.

However, Clasquin (1997:2) found that Hindi and Gujarati speaking groups in Pretoria have even incorporated English into their temple services. In some centres where there is a very small Gujarati community, e.g.. in Ladysmith, it has been noted that other Indian linguistic groups have been incorporated and where necessary English language is being used. In such situations Gujarati shares the domain with English.

#### **4.5.11 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES PROMOTING LANGUAGE**

The very important role of eisteddfods in language maintenance specially among the younger generation has been discussed in chapter three. Religio-cultural activities have been discussed under religion. Cultural activities in marriage customs and other religious customs are also illustrated in chapter three. Most of the caste based groups such as the Parshuram Mandal, Patidar Society, the Mandhata Mandal and the Natal Rajput Association hold annual cultural evenings. The community Gujarati schools arrange prize

giving functions in which pupils render cultural items such as dance, drama, singing and speech making.

Production of **Drama** in the Gujarati community is much more popular than in other linguistic groups in the Indian community. One of the first known plays to be produced was '*Dagaa Baa'j Duniya*' in 1930, produced by the Shree Surat Arya Bhajan Mandal. The participants were all males and males enacted the female roles. Another play '*Bhagya Rekha*' was produced by the same group in 1948 assisted by the poet and author P. Gangadia from India who had visited Durban.

The Gujarati Mahila Mandal was active in drama productions at their annual functions. A highlight was *Koine Kahesho Nahi* produced at their silver jubilee celebration in 1955. On that occasion an outstanding journal of literary quality was also published which was edited by Pandit Nardev Vedalankar. In the 1980's two Gujarati groups in Durban, Milan Kendra and Nishani Kalakar produced full three act dramas "*Man Man Marun Man*" and "*Naseeb Falyun*" respectively. The Johannesburg based group '*Jankaar*' produced a tragedy *Ame Barfna Pankhi* in 1981 which they took on tour to in Natal and Cape provinces. This play received positive reviews from the public and press. One-act plays were regular features of the local eistedfodds; but regular records have not been kept and therefore it was difficult to get more information.

#### **4.6 EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE REPRODUCTION**

Education is very important with respect to language maintenance. If children's proficiency in a minority language is fostered at school and they learn to read and write it, this will contribute to maintenance. No provision was made in South Africa for teaching Gujarati in mainstream state education until 1977.

The Christian missionary schools were the earliest educational institutions active in many parts of Natal, and they established English schools for children of Indian immigrants. The primary object of the missionary education in most colonial countries was evangelization. In 1894 the Natal Department of Education assumed responsibility for Indian education. After Transvaal received responsible government Act No.25 of 1907 was passed which provided for free education for coloured and Indian children on the same basis as for white children (Naidoo:1989). However, very soon separate arrangements for education of the whites and non-whites became a reality. Under article 85 of the Union of South Africa Act of 1909, the provinces retained the right to control primary and secondary education with the support of the central government. (Maharaj 1979:347)

Dignitaries and officials of the Indian Government periodically visited the colony to report on the prevailing conditions among Indians in Natal. Their severe critical remarks on the appalling conditions fell on deaf ears and the authorities made very little effort to bring about any change. Only after the arrival of Agent-General for India in South Africa Sri Srinivasa Sastri and the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 between India and South Africa was there any positive action in establishing education and welfare facilities. By the 'upliftment clause' educational and other facilities were to be provided to those Indians who chose to remain and become part of the permanent population of South Africa.

A Commission of Inquiry into education for Indians was appointed in 1928 under the chairmanship of Mr. J Dyson who found the facilities inadequate especially at the state-aided schools. At this time the Gujarati language had been taught in the Bree Street Government

Indian School in the **Transvaal**. Three teachers were brought from India to teach in this school. They were the prominent Mr. P S Joshi, Mr. J D Dave and Mr. K S Shah. Mr. K.P.Kichlu who also assisted the Commission did not support Gujarati teachings and recommended the abolition of the language "although it was the opinion of the principals and educational inspectors that the language did not interfere with the general curriculum." (Joshi 1942:140). Mr. Kichlu was obsessed with the notion that instruction in Indian languages was out of place in South Africa. In this regard the Dyson commission report stated that "...if the Indian community desires to teach the children Indian vernaculars, they should be permitted to do so outside the school hours, and by separate teachers paid for by the Indian community." (Naidoo 1989:108). Indian languages were thereafter discontinued in government schools.

It is not surprising that as a result of the government policy soon after the Gujarati community took responsibility to build their own schools for mother tongue-education. The first of the community Gujarati schools was built in 1931 in Port Elizabeth; and in 1933 the Surat Hindu Gujarati School in Durban and the Pretoria Gujarati School in the Transvaal were built. Two of the largest Gujarati schools in South Africa, the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya and Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir were established in 1935 and 1936 respectively in Johannesburg. The Gujarati language was read, written and spoken frequently by the community. The children were taught all the subjects in the Gujarati medium at these schools. The systematic development of mother tongue education was in progress.

### **State-aided (English-medium) Indian Schools**

The system of state-aided schools represented a unique feature of community effort to provide education for its children. The Indian community must be commended for its remarkable contribution in this respect. The state and the community both contributed to the education of the Indian children. The 'platoon school' system or double shift classes was introduced when the number of school-going children increased rapidly and there was a lack of adequate accommodation. These schools operated on the same premises, as the morning schools but they were conducted after lunch. The demand for school accommodation was so great that the system continued till 1983. The Gujarati schools were run on the same premises in the afternoons from three o'clock to five o'clock.

In 1961, The Department of Indian Affairs was established in keeping with the policy of separate development of the government. Indian education was transferred to this department. There was great criticism of this move since it did not match the standards and facilities provided for the 'whites' by the Provincial Education Departments. Having been robbed of the franchise long ago there was very little the minority Indian community could do to change the situation. Ironically, no mother tongue education was included in the school curriculum, although a Department of 'Indian' Education was created.

The Indian community was further perturbed by the 1967 declaration that Afrikaans was to be a compulsory subject for the Senior Certificate Examination. There was bitter resentment from the community. (#8 Mr.I.K.) The majority of Indians resided in Natal where English, and not Afrikaans, was the popular language.

In spite of many obstacles Indian Education has made phenomenal progress and by 1970 education up to and including standard ten was made completely free. The most positive step yet taken was that by 1979 education was declared compulsory for all Indian children in the 7 to 15 years age group (Naidoo 1989 : 103-123).

Indian languages were introduced only in 1977 at secondary school level. After the inception of Indian language teaching at Secondary level, Indian languages were introduced at primary school in 1984 starting in standard two. Naidoo (1989 : 114) states that these languages have not proved to be popular and only a few schools offer them. Perhaps an underlying reason for this has been that they were not offered as an examination subject. The curriculum design and the time allocation made Indian languages appear as avoidable appendages rather than respectable part of a normal education.

The level of education in English and Gujarati is shown in Table 4.6. and Table 4.7. These figures are important in documenting their exposure to and proficiency in English and Gujarati languages. The respondents' linguistic repertoire is established. Their urban background and education through the English medium is suggestive of a higher level of proficiency in English and a lower level in Gujarati. They claim to have a higher education in English than Gujarati. There is a significant percentage of respondents and their children (when compared to English) who indicate that they have had **no** education in the Gujarati language. As education is the basis of a strong foundation in language, a gradual shift is likely from Gujarati to English.



**TABLE 4.6.**

**EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH AND GUJARATI LANGUAGES BY PERCENTAGE (HEAD AND SPOUSE)**

MEMBER	PRIMARY		SECONDARY		TERTIARY		OTHER		NONE	
	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati
HEAD	6.3	49.4	45.1	37.7	36.6	1.9	11.4	3.1	0.6	8.1
SPOUSE	9.8	46.8	54.3	42.2	28.7	4.5	6.1	0.6	1.2	5.8

**TABLE 4.7.**

**EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH AND GUJARATI LANGUAGES BY PERCENTAGE (CHILDREN)**

MEMBER	PRIMARY		SECONDARY		TERTIARY		OTHER		NONE	
	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati	English	Gujarati
CHILD1	16.0	59.4	31.9	26.6	39.9	1.4	10.4	2.1	1.8	10.5
CHILD2	24.3	63.8	29.9	23.6	33.3	0.8	10.4	0.0	2.1	11.8
CHILD3	25.6	60.7	24.4	23.8	36.7	1.2	10.0	0.0	3.3	14.3
CHILD4	13.5	52.8	32.4	30.6	35.1	2.8	18.9	0.0	0.0	13.9

#### 4.6.1 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

In the pre-apartheid era the state's policy on language was to promote English and Afrikaans, the official languages. The most obvious means for promotion of a language would be the school system. The state implemented the compulsory teaching of the official languages in state schools. The Gujarati community organisations established educational societies to provide mother-tongue (Gujarati) education at the schools on the same premises (which they owned) after English school hours.

In this survey the respondents were asked "Where did you study Gujarati?" **79.6%** of the respondents studied Gujarati in South Africa and **13.4%** studied in India. As **13.3%** of the respondents are over the age group of **61** years and it is most likely that members of this group studied in India. The Gujarati language has been fairly well maintained in South Africa. Besides the ancestors the high percent of Gujaratis who studied in this country have also contributed to its maintenance.

The data analysis of respondents who attended the Gujarati school shows that most of them attended society organised schools. The following table shows more details of the response.

**TABLE 4.8**

##### **INSTITUTION OF LEARNING OF THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE**

Home - through family	54.9%
Private tuition	4.7%
Community Gujarati school	80.2%
Madressa	.5%
State school	1.6%
Other	2.3%

There is an overlap of the domains because some of the respondents who studied at home also went to a community school. Most of the respondents, 80.2% went to community school and 54.9% learned the language only at home. Few took private tuition and those will be discussed later. Fewer than 1.6% learned Gujarati at State schools since Indian Languages were really introduced only in 1984 when the government instituted the 'tricameral' parliament. This system gave the White, Coloured and Indian people separate representation in government. Africans were excluded from the government.

#### **4.6.1.1 PRIVATE AND ANGLO-VERNACULAR SCHOOLS**

As early as 1911 the Gujaratis endeavoured to provide educational facilities in the Gujarati language by establishing private and society organised schools. Every effort was made to conduct classes, even in a temple, or a house or a garage. In fact when the government could not provide adequate accommodation for the 'English' schools, the institutions and buildings which had been established for mother tongue education were used as State Aided Indian Schools. (Vedalkar 1975).

In 1910 a pioneer in the education of the Gujarati language, V N Naik, opened a Gujarati school in the centre of Durban. The school was run under his supervision and he served as a teacher. His school was systematically organised and therefore won the respect of the Gujarati speaking community. Children of Hindu, Parsee and Muslim Gujaratis attended this school to learn Gujarati. As a result of proper administration and strict discipline the enrollment increased from about 20 to 70 children by the end of the year. This resulted in three more teachers being employed at the school.

The school time was from two o'clock to five o'clock in the afternoon. The classes were held five days a week. The school fee charged at the time was five shillings a month. The children of the poor were exempted from paying fees and they were given free books. On many an occasion the expenditure exceeded the income but the deficit was made up by Naik himself. (Desai 1992)

Owing to the lack of educational facilities in the English medium, English language was also taught at the school. Since both English and Gujarati languages were taught it was also known as the Anglo-vernacular school. In addition to the Gujarati language other subjects such as arithmetic and bookkeeping were also taught. History and Geography of India were included in the curriculum. Above all, importance was given to the moral education of a child. This school was in existence from 1911 to 1916 (Vedalkar:1975)

In 1917 the **Anglo Gujarati Educational Society** was established to provide parallel education in English and Gujarati mediums. A knowledge of the English language was becoming increasingly necessary for daily correspondence in the business field. When the school opened formal instruction was given in both the English and the Gujarati languages. Other subjects in the school curriculum included Arithmetic, History, Geography and Bookkeeping. A unique feature of the school was that its school curriculum was similar to the one of the 'middle schools' in Gujarat, India. In Gujarat at that time many schools introduced English in standard four and the primary school offered education up to standard seven level. The purpose of such a unique system was to facilitate the entry of the Gujarati child into the subsequent standard in Gujarat on his return to India.

Immigration law fixed a period of three years for the children born in India for entering the Union of South Africa. The clause also stipulated that a person will forfeit the domicile rights if he absented himself for more than three years or left South Africa before the time limit of three years expired. (Joshi 1942:140). Joshi says that the Transvaal traders resented this legislation which was introduced to force the Indians to repatriate. Therefore when a Gujarati visited his family in India his child's education was secured as he had the opportunity to study Gujarati and English in Natal and continue with his education in the subsequent standard upon returning to Gujarat. This would not have been possible if the syllabi were not compatible. The examinations were also conducted on a similar basis so that in changing schools a year would not be wasted. This school was operational until 1925.

Persons who were learned in the Gujarati language also made great sacrifices and contributed to the teaching of the Gujarati language. The standard maintained at these schools was reasonably high and therefore they attracted many pupils. Mr.A.A.(#35) said many Muslim Gujarati parents sent their children to private schools since individual attention was given to each child.

Amongst the pioneers of individual **private schools** were N.B. Desai and his son N.N. Desai who started the Desai School in 1917 and continued up to 1957 in Durban. The classes were conducted at home and a small fee was charged. Other notable private schools were those of Pravasi, Thaker, J. Desai and A. Goshalia. In Ladysmith, a private school was commenced where **Gujarati and Hindi** languages were taught and pupils from Gujarati and Hindi speaking families together attended the school. The school had been in existence between 1922 to 1972. This was the Vithal Lalla

School, a rare establishment in Northern Natal (Vedalankar:1975).

In the Transvaal there had been no need to conduct private school since the language was taught in a government school. Mr. J.D. Desai and Mr. P.S. Joshi did give private tuition in Gujarati to some children. Mr Gopalji Jivanji taught for 21 years in his own private school in Lenasia from 1973 to 1994. This period was crucial for the Indians since the aftermath of the Group Areas Act had particularly left most of the Indian community devastated when they had to rebuild their community. The community was still very concerned about the teaching of the mother tongue. In the Cape Province a few offered private tuition in East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town; but then records are not available.

Mr. H.N. Arya conducted his private classes for Gujarati children from 1947. He was educated at *Supa Gurukul*, a Gujarati boarding school in Surat. He served as a principal and employed other teachers at the school to assist him. The school became very popular in Johannesburg under the names **Hindi Vidyamandir**, where he taught Hindi, Sanskrit and Bhagavad Gita, **Gurjar Vidya Niketan** where Gujarati was taught and **Navjivan Shishu Vihar** which was a nursery school. This was the only school in South Africa which provided all three facilities and had an average of 300 pupils each year. The school closed in 1990 since the principal retired and there was no one to continue; thus the community lost a valuable service.

#### **4.6.1.2 SCHOOLS UNDER COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

The first community Gujarati school was opened under the direction of a board established by the Surat Hindu Association in Durban. Sheik Mehtab, who had an excellent record of teaching Gujarati was appointed as its first teacher. The teachers were paid a meagre salary. The pupils were charged a fee of five shillings per month. Rent had to be paid for the premises and the Association donated R30.00 a month to assist in the financial commitments. Annual examinations were held and prizes were awarded to the best students. This school existed for about fifteen years until demands for a bigger and better school were made.

The number of school going children increased after the Cape Town Agreement in 1927. New immigration laws affected the Indians as mentioned earlier. Children under the age of sixteen years were allowed to accompany their mothers from India to South Africa and could acquire domicile rights. Therefore in the third decade teaching of the Gujarati language became a priority for the community and schools were established in all the centres where Gujaratis lived. Between 1932 and 1960 about 90% of the school-going children in the Gujarati community were receiving mother tongue education. (Vedalankar 1975). This was a fruitful period in the education of the Gujarati language in South Africa. None of the other Indian linguistic communities was able to achieve this measure of success.

A few major schools in the main cities will be discussed below to illustrate the structure of the syllabi, efficient administration, importing of teachers of the Gujarati language, lack of trained teachers, poor salary scales, private funding and no government subsidy, language loyalty and commitment of

the community. The main aims of establishing Gujarati schools in South Africa were to foster and promote the Gujarati vernacular education as well as religious instruction.

It has been established in chapter two (Table 2.1) that the largest population of the Gujarati speakers reside in the Transvaal. Since they were traders they had chosen to live in the urban area of Johannesburg. Most of the Gujarati Hindus were divided into caste groups and nurtured their own welfare. The Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj (THSS) was established in 1932 to unite all the Hindu Gujaratis under one society and pool their resources in order to strengthen the community. Amongst other activities the society established a Gujarati school, **Shree Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya** in Johannesburg in 1935. The school had three branches, one at Gandhi Hall in Fox Street, another at the Johannesburg Indian High School at Fordsburg and the third at Gold Street Indian school,. (See Table 4.9 for pupil enrolment figures of the three main Gujarati schools in South Africa.). In 1936 another Gujarati school **Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir** was also established at Fordsburg in Johannesburg by the Transvaal United Patidar Society. (TUPS). The number of pupils increased steadily at all the Gujarati schools and by 1960 reached a peak of one thousand in each school.

Unfortunately, like all other Gujarati schools in South Africa both the above schools were affected by the Group Areas Act of 1950 and had to be relocated in Lenasia, a suburb developed for Indians, outside Johannesburg. This disruption was a tremendous setback for each school since the properties purchased and developed for the schools had to be given up and new premises purchased in the area of resettlement.



**TABLE 4.9**  
**PUPIL ENROLMENT**

**AT:**

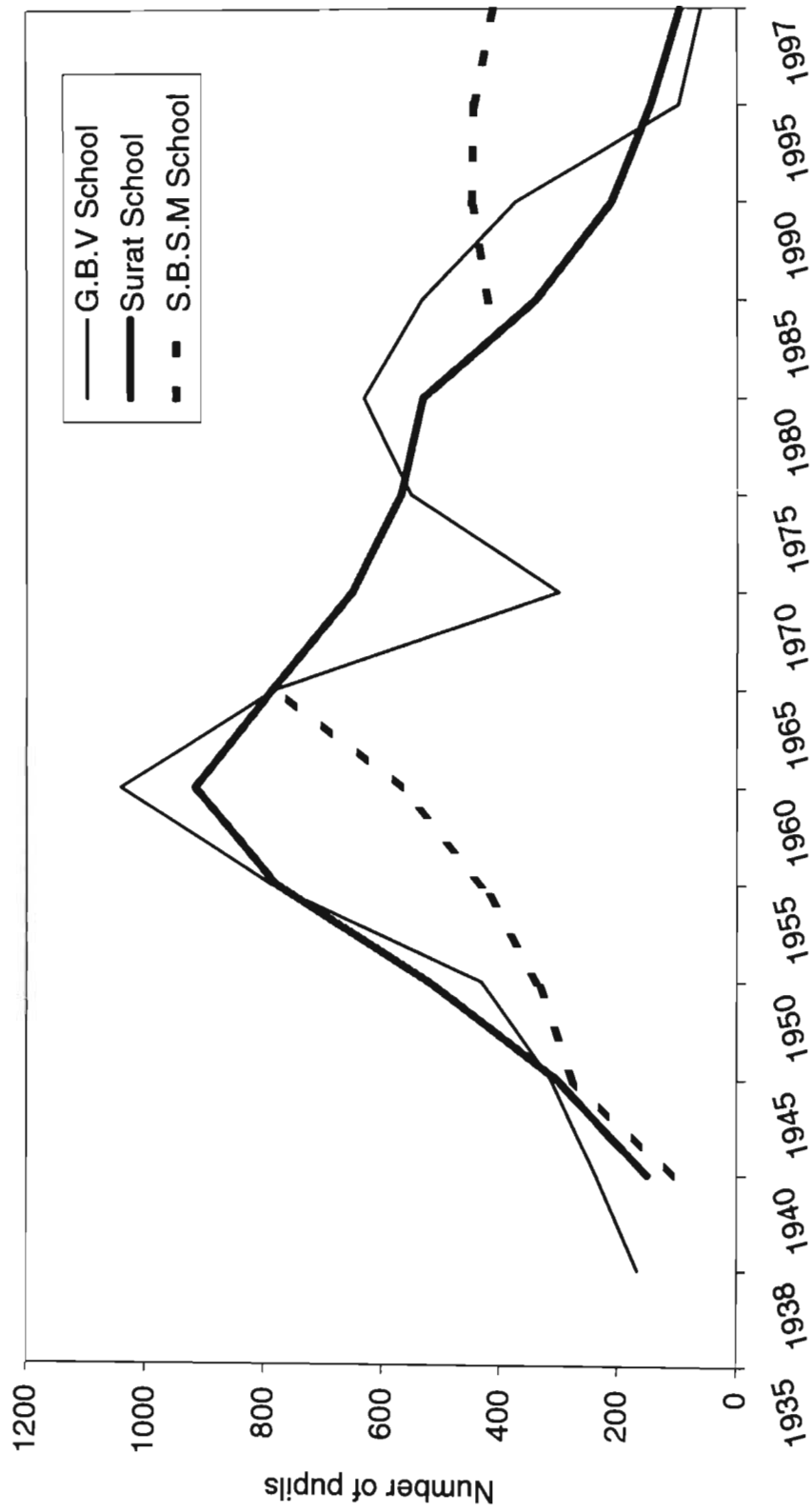
**GANDHI BHARAT VIDYALAY (LENASIA) AND SURAT HINDU GUJARATI SCHOOLS (DURBAN)**  
**SHREE BHARAT SHARDA MANDIR (LENASIA)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>G.B.V. School</b>	<b>S.B.S.M.</b>	<b>SURAT HINDOO</b>
1935		70	100
1938	167	-	
1940	237	111	150
1945	313	275	302
1950	431	335	521
1955	789	429	780
1960	1041	570	916
1965	781	777	785
1970	300		650
1975	551		567
1980	630		530
1985	532	419	339
1990	373	447	211
1995	98	444	145
1997	60	409	95

It became difficult to find premises in Lenasia for **Shree Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya**. Therefore, four government schools were used to conduct its Gujarati schools. Two buses were required to transport the pupils to and from the various extensions of Lenasia. Due to many other reasons there has been a decline in the number of pupils learning Gujarati. Mr.M.K.P.(#44) reported that presently only one branch of the school is in operation. There is now a great apathy in the community towards mother tongue education. The student enrolment **Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir** has remained constant over the last ten years.(See graph 4.1)

In 1933, the Surat Hindu Educational Society (SHES) was established by the Surat Hindu Association with the sole purpose of building and conducting a Gujarati school in Durban, **Natal**. A property was bought by the Surat Hindu Association (SHA) to meet this obligation. SHES was established for the administration and general control of the **Surat Hindu Gujarati School** in 1933. The school was to be managed totally by Surat Hindu Education Society while financial aid was to be given by Surat Hindu Association. The majority of the Gujarati population was centred in and around Durban therefore the school was located in the city. The same premises were used for the morning English School and the afternoon Gujarati School. This obviated problems of distance and transport and the safety of the children.

The school was fortunate in immediately obtaining the services of local teachers, one most outstanding teacher at the time was Chandubhai C. Patel (Desai 1992:) who proved capable and set the school on a systematically organised education system with a sound foundation. The school consisted of 75 pupils distributed into four standards. Three sessions a day were held for instruction (8.00 am - 11 .00 am; 1.30 pm - 3.00 pm; 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm). The subjects taught



Graph 4.1  
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were parallel to those in India viz Gujarati, Arithmetic, History, Geography and Bookkeeping. The tuition fee charged was four shillings per pupil per month. Physical training class was conducted after school by the teacher.

In 1945 under the guidance of the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj, the **Kathiawad Gujarati School** was opened on its premises in Lorne Street, Durban. Although the school was open to all it served mainly the people of the Kathiawadi community. Most of the children attended the English Primary day school between 8.00 am and 2.00 pm. Therefore it was convenient for children who lived outside the city to remain on the premises and attend the afternoon Gujarati School from 3.00 pm to 5 pm. Owing to a lack of teachers the school closed in 1970.

The **Pretoria Hindu Gujarati School** was established in 1932 to serve the Gujarati community in Pretoria. It was established in the city centre and had an average enrolment of 250 pupils. The school had to move to Laudium, an Indian suburb, as a result of the Group Areas Act.

Two Gujarati schools are serving the Gujarati communities in the Eastern Cape viz. the **Port Elizabeth Hindu Gujarati School** and the **East London Gujarati School** established in 1931 and 1948 respectively. Both these schools also had to be relocated outside the city when affected by the Group Areas Act.

The **Gandhi Memorial School** in Cape Town celebrated its fiftieth anniversary this year (1997) and honoured its most distinguished teacher cum supervisor Ramchandra Kovid who had taught from the time of its inception. It came into being in the historical District Six area of Cape Town until it had to be relocated to the

Indian area of Rylands following the implementation of the Group Areas Act.

Many other Gujarati Schools were established in smaller towns in each province where there were Gujarati speakers. In Natal there were Gujarati schools located at Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Tongaat, Verulam and Estcourt. It was difficult to obtain teachers therefore local, unqualified teachers had to be employed. In 1972 the Pietermaritzburg school was fortunate in obtaining a Gujarati teacher from Transvaal, Vinaychandra Patel who had good qualification in the language. As a result the school gained popularity. There were also community Gujarati schools functioning at Springs, Benoni and Louis Trichardt in the Transvaal.

#### **4.6.1.2.1 QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN THE SERVICE OF THE SCHOOLS**

The basis of proper instruction in the mother tongue is suitably qualified teachers. The newly established Gujarati schools in South Africa were faced with an immediate problem of obtaining qualified and trained teachers. The parent organisations in each city negotiated with the South African Immigration authorities for permission for trained teachers to be brought from India. After much representation each time, permission was granted and the society was able to recruit trained teachers. Mr.P.N.V.(#1)stated that no other linguistic group other than Gujarati speakers, in the Indian community has invested in obtaining qualified teachers from India when there were none available locally.

In the Transvaal highly qualified teachers of the calibre of renowned author and social and political activist Mr. P.S. Joshi, Mr. J.D. Dave and Mr. K.S. Shah joined the schools. **The Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya**

from the time of its establishment managed to invite seven teachers from India. Two teachers were brought in 1947 and one in 1950 to serve the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay in Johannesburg. The school has been fortunate to have been served by a qualified teacher Mr. M.K. Patel who had obtained a Teachers Higher Diploma and had teaching experience in Gujarat. He has served the School for the last fifty years in the capacity of teacher, principal and supervisor and has finally retired. He said that there is no one to replace him and even if someone were available the number of pupils has dropped extremely low and does not warrant the employment of new teachers. In the past half century qualified teachers such as B.F. Patel, A.G. Patel, V.B. Patel and C.N. Mehta have contributed tremendously in the 'upliftment' of the school and the Gujarati language. Other teachers who had served this school were also highly qualified. Among them U.M. Jokhakar, K.B. Mehta and Mrs T.K. Mehta possessed Teachers Diplomas from Ahmedabad, Surat and Baroda respectively. Mr. A.J. Vidyalankar was a graduate of *Gurukul Kangari* and Mrs. S.D. Bhatt had a Bachelor of Science degree from Bombay.

Mr. P. Khandubhai had served as the first teacher of **Shree Bharat Sharada Mandir** in Johannesburg. This school also had been very fortunate in appointing two graduates of *Gurukul Kangan*, Mr. Bhanudatt J. Patel and Mr. Sudhir Vidyalankar from India. In addition to teaching Gujarati Mr. Vinaychandra B. Patel also introduced physical training at the school and occasionally took his pupils for demonstration to other towns.

Pupils of the **Pretoria Gujarati School** have been very well trained in the Gujarati language compared to other towns. Teachers 'expert' in their field were N Somabhai and Chotubhai Mehta who were invited by the school when it was established to impart mother tongue

education. Another qualified teacher who came later under a five year contract was Babubhai D. Patel. He had to return to India when the contract expired and the school had to employ local unqualified teachers. Mr. Dinesh Bhatt also had come on a five year contract to Louis Trichardt in the Northern Transvaal.

The first priest-cum-teacher Pranshankar Vinayak Joshi arrived in April 1934 to serve the **Surat Hindu Gujarati School** and the Gujarati community of Natal. The SHES managed to obtain teachers from India from 1934 up to 1947. In 1936 when the school obtained another teacher, Naranji Vaghjee Patel from India he was appointed the headmaster of the school. The school gained popularity and by 1938 the enrolment of pupils increased to 150 pupils. The next batch of teachers came in the years 1939, Govindjee Nichabhai Desai; 1943, Ukabhai Dahyabhai Patel; 1945, Keshavram R. Trivedi and the last one in 1947, Nardev Vedalankar. By 1947 the school roll was approximately 450 pupils. These new trained teachers laid firm the foundations for the Gujarati school. Owing to the increase in the number of pupils and vacancy created by outgoing teachers other suitably qualified local teachers were also being appointed. Most of these teachers at the time had also studied through the Gujarati medium in India.

The year 1947 brought about an awareness and awakening in language, culture and religion amongst the Indians in the Indian diaspora when India gained her independence. In the same year SHES obtained the services of an eminent Hindu scholar from India, proficient in Vedic Studies, and the Hindi and Gujarati languages. Rambiritch (1960 : 69) states 'The Gujarati community in the middle of the forties imported a very capable Gujarati and Hindi Scholar from Gurukul Kangari, near Haradwar, in the person of Nardev Vedalankar'.

The numbers of Gujarati school-going children continued to increase since the Gujaratis had decided that South Africa was to become their permanent home. By 1960 the pupil enrolment at most Gujarati schools increased. (see graph 4.1).

#### **4.6.1.2.2 TEACHERS' TRAINING**

The need for trained teachers in the Indian community cannot be over-emphasized. When English medium schools were established following the Dyson commission's report it was realised that soon Indian teachers would have to be trained since the whites could not meet the demand of the growing population. Colleges of Education were set up in all the provinces to train teachers. Yet when education became part of the responsibility of the House of Delegates in 1984 and Indian languages were introduced in the Indian schools no provision was made to train teachers for Indian languages at colleges of Education. As a result the Indian pupils have benefited very little from studying their mother tongue. A small number of teachers in Indian Languages were trained at The University of Durban-Wesville by the Department of Indian Languages in collaboration with the Faculty of Education.

The Gujarati community took cognisance of the importance of obtaining trained teachers. In Johannesburg a student, Kanti Mehta, was given a scholarship by the High Commission of India to attend a training college in India to study through the Gujarati medium. Mr. Mehta returned in 1955 after studying at J. J. Training College in Surat. On his return he taught at Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay from 1955 to 1964 then at Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir between 1964 and 1977. He designed his own curriculum to suit conditions in South Africa and first conducted teacher training classes at Springs where he trained



13 local unqualified teachers and then he trained 7 teachers in Benoni.

In 1978 Mr. Mehta and Mr. M.K. Patel conducted teacher's training classes for Maha Gujarati Parishad and trained altogether 80 unqualified teachers in various areas. Nardev Vedalankar also conducted teachers' training classes in 1980 at Surat School in Durban. Volunteers from members of community and local schools attended these courses. He also taught students from the Education Faculty at the University of Durban Westville where he lectured Gujarati, the Department of Indian Languages.

#### **4.6.1.2.3 ADMINISTRATION OF GUJARATI SCHOOLS**

Each Gujarati school is run by a local society and the Management Committee is responsible for managing its affairs. A supervisor is appointed to liaise between the school staff and the members of the committee. The person appointed to the post is not paid a salary and his/her service is voluntary. The Principal is in charge of the school. His/her task is to admit new pupils, keep records of monthly fees and a record of teachers' salaries and their attendance. He/she also supervises the behaviour of the pupils and teachers and the discipline in the classes. He also serves as an invigilation officer for examinations. The examination papers set by various teachers are moderated by the Supervisor/ Superintendent.

#### **4.6.1.2.4 SYLLABI**

The Gujarati Schools in South Africa do not follow a common syllabus. The chief reason is that all the schools are not under the control of one Education Department or Society. Each school is under the supervision of its own local society. In 1978 the

Gujarati Shiksha Mandal of the South African Gujarati Maha Parishad compiled a syllabus to serve as a guide to all the Gujarati Schools in South Africa. It was greatly welcomed by most of the schools since there had been an absence of any such syllabus. Desai (1992:180)

In the early years a syllabus similar to that of Gujarat was used. All the prescribed books were imported from India. In later years, when almost all the children were South African born, it was noticed that the content was not in keeping with the South African environment. Mr. Vedalankar, chairperson of the Education Committee of Gujarati language in South Africa advised that in such instances material not in consonance with our environment should be omitted and only selected lessons should be taught. Once a series of prescribed books was written by a scholar for the junior primary level but due to lack of funds it was never published.

In the early period, tuition was given in history, geography, mathematics, general science, bookkeeping and the Gujarati language. The curriculum at the Gujarati School was so designed that if a student went from South Africa to Gujarat he could easily gain admission there. This provision was made to accommodate those pupils who moved between South Africa and India in three year periods. At first the school offered tuition up to standard 4 level and in a few years standard 5 was introduced. Later, the pupils who were born in South Africa and were recognised as South African citizens, wished to continue their Gujarati education at higher level. As a result standards six and seven were introduced in Natal and standard eight in the Transvaal.

English education made greater demands on the pupils and it soon became apparent that history, geography,

bookkeeping and science relating to India had to be dropped from the curriculum. The time available for instruction in the Gujarati School was only two hours in the afternoon. Therefore only Gujarati, Arithmetic, Hindi and Dharmashiksha (religious instruction) were taught from 1957. For the first time simple and informative text books for religious instruction were written by Nardev Vedalankar and published in three parts. Other Gujarati Schools in the Republic of South Africa also welcomed these books.

The conservative system of learning the lesson by rote was popular at the beginning. The pupils learned in 'parrot' fashion and produced the same work in the examinations. When the children left school it was realised that they were unable to comprehend and apply the language. The pupils were encouraged to express their own thoughts and write in their own words.

When the higher standards six and seven were introduced there were few qualified teachers who could manage these classes. All the teachers were not capable or qualified to teach Dharmashiksha and Hindi. Therefore a period system in the time table was introduced. A teacher qualified in a certain subject had to teach that subject.

In the years that followed it became more and more apparent that emphasis should now be focused only on the teaching of the Gujarati language. The Gujarati language was used less frequently and English was used for wider communication. Rambiritch (1960:72) wrote "The claims of the English school take precedence to the detriment of the language of one's birth." The Gujarati school and home were the only strong domains where the language was used.

A new curriculum was drawn up excluding all other subjects except Gujarati. Optimum use of the two hours

available for teaching Gujarati would be made in the new curriculum. A significant change noted was the exclusion of arithmetic which was not welcome by the parents. The Gujaratis are known traders and possess the skill to calculate quickly and efficiently. However, modern technology had replaced this with calculators. The new decimal system brought about a change in the methods used in teaching mathematics. Mathematics had become a compulsory subject in the English school. The method used in the Gujarati school differed from that of the English school. As a result it created confusion in the pupil's mind. It was decided to leave the teaching of mathematics to the English school. For all the reasons mentioned Arithmetic was discontinued as a subject in the Gujarati school curriculum by most of the schools in South Africa. The new syllabus focused exclusively on the teaching of the Gujarati language. The standard of Gujarati education compares favourably with that in India.

#### **4.6.1.2.5 FUNDING**

The entire cost of running the school has been borne by the Gujarati community. No aid is granted by the state or local authorities. The parent bodies of the Gujarati community give financial assistance to the Gujarati schools. In addition the pupils pay monthly school fees. The teachers' salaries are very low and therefore qualified and trained teachers rarely apply for a post.

Prescribed books are imported from India and kept in stock.. Sometimes photocopies have to be used if there are not enough books available. Money has to be outlaid for the purpose since books are not sold immediately and the cost is only recovered when all

the books are sold. Stationery is also purchased for examination purposes and administration. The fees collected are not sufficient and the expenditure has to be met with additional finance. In most cases the school properties are owned by the community therefore rent does not constitute a problem.

The officials of the community schools question the need to continue community schools. A question was asked of the respondents in the sample "Since Gujarati is offered at schools is there any need to continue running of community schools which offer Gujarati? and Why?" 77.8% replied '**Yes**' and 22.2% said 'No'.

Those who said 'Yes' gave the following reasons:

- 1 Special emphasis is given to language
- 2 Private/community schools can accommodate culture
- 3 Basic cultural values are entrenched
- 4 There is a sense of belonging here, same identity and culture
- 5 State schools offer limited work in reading and writing
- 6 Lack of time in schools
- 7 More opportunities to learn in Gujarati environment
- 8 The Education Department has no funds for our language
- 9 Smaller numbers in state schools
- 10 Gujarati language is not offered in East London in state schools thus community schools are necessary
- 11 Pupils attend Model C schools where Gujarati is not offered
- 12 all pupils do not choose Gujarati at state school since there is an option
- 13 Needed for those who marry into Gujarati community

The 'No' respondents had this to say (no need for Gujarati schools)

- 1 Bringing teachers from India can be costly
- 2 Gujarati teaching is duplicated
- 3 Gujarati does not meet today's needs
- 4 Now there are mixed groups (no pure Gujaratis therefore irrelevant)
- 5 There are limitations in Gujarati schools
- 6 No employment opportunities

Generally the Gujarati community is in favour of continuing community schools since they have proved their relevance and have more faith in it than state schools. Yet they are aware of the problems facing both the options and try to find a balance between them.

#### **4.6.2 GUJARATI LANGUAGE IN STATE SCHOOLS**

Education is a significant factor in the growth of any community. In South Africa there was no equity in education before 1994. The Nationalist Government of 1948 introduced *apartheid* meaning separate development of races. Chattopadhyaya (1970:250) explains "It was designed to perpetuate the White men's superiority over the non-Whites by denying the latter equal opportunities for progress in spite of their overwhelming numerical majority over the former". As far as education was concerned the Indian community itself bore a substantial portion of the cost of the school buildings. Where the state spent 22,843 pounds the community contributed 50,000 pounds. Chattopadhyaya (1970:288) cites Kichlu "Indian community gave a good account of itself in the matter of self-help in providing educational buildings and deserved the encouragement of the Administration by a liberal allotment to Indian schools out of the funds

available for school buildings in future." There was great disparity in the subsidy allotted to each child in each racial group.

Under such circumstances where the Indian contributed largely to the education of the children of the Indian community it is surprising that they were denied vernacular and religious education. In a report in the Daily News, a daily newspaper in Durban, of 1st November 1994, Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu said that it would take five years to bring about equal spending on white and black pupils.

In 1976 matters concerning the education of Indians were delegated to the South African Indian Council. Through the efforts of this Council Indian languages were introduced into secondary schools in 1977 (Naidoo 1989 : 114). The Council was criticised severely for promoting ethnicity.

Kuppasami and Pillay (1978), Maharaj and Bhana in Pachai (1979) and Naidoo (1989) have given an account of the education provided by the state in the mainstream schools for the Indians. In all these accounts very little has been mentioned of vernacular education. The state policy has been to maintain English and Afrikaans as the official languages in the Indian schools.

At the 4th National Convention of the South African Gujarati Maha Parishad, held from 1-4 April 1983, a prominent leader in the Indian community said "The best solution for the preservation of Indian languages would be to have these integrated in the English school curriculum and the Indian Community urges the Department of Indian Education to do this with effect from the beginning of 1984". This plea was met with a positive response when Indian Languages were implemented in the Indian schools from 1984.

Due to political developments, in 1984 a Tricameral system of government involving Coloureds, Whites and Indians was introduced in the country. As a result, since August 1984, Indian education has been under the control of a Department of Education and Culture in the House of Delegates.

After almost a century of struggle the Indian community welcomed the introduction of the Indian languages with mixed feelings. They were suspicious of the government's motives and feared a drop in the standard of education of the Indians. However, first syllabi for the Indian language were drawn up with the assistance of qualified academics and members from the community. The Department had very few people in its services who were proficient in the Indian languages.

During the years of Tricameral administration negative remarks and attitudes displayed by the authorities discouraged the pupils from studying Indian languages. The education officers in the House of Delegates had reservations promoting Indian languages for fear of being labelled ethnic. The Gujarati community being in the minority faced difficulties in obtaining the stipulated number of pupils to make a class. See Table 4.9. for statistics of number of pupils offering Gujarati at State Schools.

Table 4.9 shows total number of pupils offering Indian Languages from 1984 to 1994. During these years Indian education has been managed by Department of Education and Culture in the House of Delegates (HOD) whose offices were located in Durban since Natal has the majority Indian population. The statistics in the table reflects substantial pupil growth. However, the Indian population in South Africa is approximately one million and the number of pupils offering Indian languages (51,914) is only about five percent of the total population.



**TABLE 4.10****PUPILS STATISTICS IN RESPECT OF EASTERN LANGUAGES IN STATE SCHOOLS**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>HINDI</b>	<b>TAMIL</b>	<b>TELUGU</b>	<b>URDU</b>	<b>ARABIC</b>	<b>GUJARATI</b>
1984	2 575	4 042	74	290	942	86
1985	6 197	9 140	148	466	2 341	174
1986	9 025	13 210	234	575	2 879	232
1987	10 912	15 846	266	661	4 893	274
1988	11 416	16 792	325	421	5 304	155
1989	12 040	17 795	261	623	5 602	196
1990	12 231	17 490	310	603	5 703	160
1991	11 632	14 461	196	436	5 204	157
1992	14 044	17 287	1 146	917	7 003	245
1993	15 740	18 897	2 094	1 827	10 069	347
1994	17 100	19 300	2 400	2 110	10 500	504

Courtesy : House of Delegates: 1994

Since suitably qualified teachers were not available at schools part-time teachers from the community had to be employed. Even then very few of these teachers were trained. Lack of qualification of teachers has not helped to raise the interest and standard in these languages. A Subject Committees was established for each of the Indian languages and language supervisors were also appointed.

In spite of the efforts of House of Delegates little has been achieved in the maintenance of the Indian languages. The following reasons are deduced for the failure in the state schools:

The minority status of the Indian linguistic groups does not warrant the commencement of a class since the minimum requirement of the number of pupils cannot be met. This especially affects the Gujarati community which is a minority within a minority Indian community.

Total teaching time allocated is only one and half hour per week i.e. 3x30 minute periods which is not sufficient for language teaching.

The language is not included as a compulsory subject like other languages (e.g. English and Afrikaans) therefore fewer pupils study the subject.

Gujarati is not treated as an examination subject therefore the teachers' as well as pupils' attitude is negative towards it.

Indian languages are not offered at Colleges of Education therefore few qualified teachers are available.

The late introduction of the subject in the primary school discourages pupils. A standard two pupil would have to start with Gujarati at elementary level whereas a pupil from a community Gujarati school is three years ahead of his fellow pupils in the state school.

Indian languages must be offered as an integral component of the curriculum and not as a peripheral subject, in order to achieve meaningful mother-tongue education.

Suitable text books are not available for South African pupils. Very small budgets are allotted to purchasing of these books from India.

The high standard of education offered at community organised schools does not encourage the Gujarati pupils to study Gujarati language at state schools.

The Department of Education and Culture, House of Delegates had appointed special language and cultural promoters to assist in the area of language promotion. As a result Gujarati has been introduced in twelve schools in Natal as compared to only two schools offering the subject in 1991. Presently there is no language advisor appointed for Gujarati since the Provincial government formulates education policy and the small number of pupils do not warrant the services of a supervisor.

The respondents of a questionnaire in this survey indicated that only 2.1% of their children study Gujarati at a state school. 65.1% attend community school while 10.6% attend private school.

The respondents were asked "Now that Gujarati is offered in state schools will it result in its

retention?' and Why? 69.2% replied 'Yes' and 30.8% said 'No'.

Those who said 'Yes' explained that:

- 1 It helped children who could not attend Gujarati school
- 2 If children learn at state school there is no pressure to go to another school
- 3 It will develop a good foundation and ensure continuity
- 4 Yes if it was offered as a second language up to matriculation
- 5 It would increase communication in the language
- 6 It would initiate or motivate to do Gujarati

Those who replied 'No' explained that :

- 1 Indian Languages are not given importance
- 2 Teachers are not qualified or trained to teach Gujarati
- 3 Will not be retained because it is not compulsory
- 4 It is learned in parrot fashion and then forgotten like Afrikaans
- 5 Apathy of children
- 6 Now our children go to Model 'c' or 'white' schools
- 7 There are too few children therefore subject dropped
- 8 People prefer to learn Zulu

The role of the **Institute of Indian Languages** needs to be mentioned here since the Institute became very active when the Indian languages started going through a crisis in the transition period of change in the new democracy. The Institute was established in 1983 to represent the national organisations that were present in the Indian community for the promotion of the five Indian languages that are spoken in South Africa viz. Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu. The Institute's main function has been to liaise with the

education authorities on matters concerning the welfare of all Indian languages taught in schools. After continued submissions by the INSTITUTE to the Constitutional Committee Indian languages are being given recognition in the new constitution. There are nine official languages and other community languages of the minority groups. The Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) has been established to develop and promote all the languages of the country.

Submissions were made by the Institute of Indian Languages to the Minister of Education in Kwa-Zulu Natal on 20 November 1995. These include some of the following:

The Institute believes that, in keeping with the the spirit of democracy in the New South Africa, languages of all minority groups should be given the respect due to them. It is important that these languages be protected and be given the right to develop to their maximum potential.

The Institutes also believes that minority languages must be given an integral place in the school curriculum as fully fledged examination subjects in their own right and, perhaps, as options to non basic and non-critical subjects like history and geography.

The Institute is mindful that the number of pupils taking Eastern Languages may be small in certain schools. Therefore it requests the Minister to (1) treat this problem with sympathy and grant concessions wherever the need arises to allow smaller numbers in these languages and (2) to give clear directive with regard to what constitutes 'reasonable' numbers.

The Institute requests that the services of part-time teachers be allowed to continue as long as it is necessary; to make provisions in the budget for these

teachers; to request universities and colleges of education to train teachers in the Eastern Languages. Finally it was requested that communication channels be established between the Institute and the officials of the Department of Education with whom discussions and follow-up meetings can take place.

The Institute held a meeting on 11 April 1996 with Professor Rajend Mesthrie who had been selected by the Department of Arts and Culture to prepare a document on the needs of the minority communities in South Africa. The house was asked to offer comments on a document prepared as a submission to Language Task group (Langtag). The document was to serve as a basis for the discussions on minority languages in South Africa. The Langtag Conference was held in June 1996 in Pretoria and members of the Institute attended the conference and participated in the proceedings. After the conference the Langtag Committee compiled a report on the deliberations and recommendations and presented it to the Minister of Education to serve as a guide to the future Language Policy of South Africa. Up to date the Institute has not received any documents on the state policy on Indian languages.

#### **4.6.3 GUJARATI AT UNIVERSITY**

South Africa has now become a full democratic nation and still poised delicately in its initial years of freedom and going through a transition period. The Bill of Rights and Freedom Charter entrenched in the new constitution assures every individual and community in South Africa their rights. While the recognition of languages has enjoyed approval the translating of these rights into practical legislation and implementation presents the true challenge.

The University of Durban-Westville (UDW) is the only university in South Africa and perhaps in the Southern Hemisphere that offers Gujarati language courses at tertiary level. This is a unique situation but yet it has failed to attract students from any other university where such a facility is not available. This poses a threat to the Department in its survival. Presently the strategic planning exercise being undertaken at UDW envisages creating a School of Languages where all languages will be accommodated. The university is for the first time also introducing modular courses which should be attractive to students and be marketable.

When the university was established in 1961 it had totally been under white administration. India had long ago before severed ties and broken diplomatic relations with South Africa because of its apartheid policy. As a result of the academic boycott no scholars from India could take up academic posts in the Indian languages, religion or cultural departments.

For the first time Hindi and other Indian language courses were offered in 1961 at the University of Durban-Westville for a BA degree. Gujarati was offered much later in 1975 after Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and Urdu had been introduced. In the first decade of introduction Gujarati students from the Transvaal where the majority of Gujaratis are living, also enrolled at the University of Durban-Westville. Besides the Gujarati Hindu, students from the Gujarati Muslim community also joined these classes.

Up to 1987 with the exception of a few, the policy of the university had been to enrol mainly Indian students. Since the university changed its policy and accepted enrolment free of discrimination the tone of the university community has changed. A greater

proportion of 'blacks' are being admitted. With Indian students being freely admitted at other 'white' universities, fewer Indians enrol at the University of Durban-Westville. This has resulted in a drop in the number of students studying Indian languages.

Desai (1992) has explained that at the beginning syllabi were drawn up for a Gujarati Special Course and Gujarati 1st, 2nd and 3rd year courses for a BA degree. Gujarati is offered as a major subject in the 'A' group with other languages. Students have to choose any one course in the 'A' group which is compulsory. The Gujarati Special Course was the modification of the 1st year course especially for beginners. The beginners first had to master the script and pronunciation before they could proceed to the 1st year level. Since 1985 Special Courses have been dropped from the curriculum on account of the fact that a student would take four years to complete an Arts degree whereas in other subjects only three years were required. The Gujarati Honours course has only been recently offered. This is also the only university and institution where Gujarati with other Indian languages, is offered as a teaching method subject in the Education Faculty, provided by the Department of Indian Languages in the Faculty of Arts.

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) set up by the new government is engaged in formulating a policy for tertiary education in South Africa. It has been suggested that the universities serving a particular province be rationalised in an attempt to avoid duplication of departments and courses offered at universities that are in close proximity thereby reducing the enormous cost implications involved.



#### 4.7 CONCLUSION

In the historical perspective I have illustrated the importance of political, economical and social factors in the maintenance of a language and to what extent these factors have contributed to the maintenance of the Gujarati language in South Africa. The national dominance of English and to a certain extent Afrikaans in Politics and Economics has been responsible for the downplay of Gujarati. Only in the Social arena and only in certain specific domains has Gujarati been able to hold its ground, the most important ones being home, family, and community. Domain overlap has not been ruled out and this can predict maintenance and/or shift in the language.

The religious domain has proved very strong for the Gujarati language. This has been possible since all the Indian linguistic groups preserve their separate domains for religious practices due to peculiarities in each group. In contrast, all of them 'come together' in Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) e.g. welfare and other social services. Presently the community can continue using Gujarati in this domain without the fear of its being claimed by another language though there is bound to be a little code-mixing and code switching due to the preponderance of English in most domains.

Education in the vernacular is not adequate for survival of the Gujarati language unless the use is extended to the family. The decline in the number of students in the 'Gujarati schools' and state schools and university is not unprecedented. A number of reasons could be attributed to it which have become apparent in the responses of the community.

It is clear that Gujarati does not have the ethnolinguistic vitality to present a threat to any

official language of South Africa. Yet the government has not formulated any policy, in spite of demands from the community, to provide visible support to the maintenance of the minority Indian Languages of South Africa. How long will a language be considered 'foreign' in a situation where Indian languages have survived for more than a century and four decades. In addition by 1960, 94.5% had been recorded as born in South Africa. (Brijlal 1989:27).

## CHAPTER 5

### CHANGING PATTERNS OF LANGUAGE USE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

"Multilingualism should be regarded not as a problem but rather as a rich national resource", said Prof. Mubanga Kashoki, former rector of the Copperbelt University in Zambia (1993:4). He added that Multilingual, and not Monolingual individuals ought to be regarded as ideal citizens of linguistically complex modern nation states. South Africa with its eleven official languages and several community languages recognised by the new constitution, is rightfully regarded as a multilingual and multicultural nation, popularly referred to as the 'rainbow nation'. The state had to take cognisance of the reality of the situation and on the advice of the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) and the Council of Education Ministers (1995); the Minister of Education Prof.S.M.E.Bengu, made the following statement sent to schools.

"A key feature of a new multilingual policy will be that it promotes the use and the development of two or more languages throughout schooling in such a way that no language should be introduced at the expense of another. Learners' home languages, as well as the additional languages they wish to acquire, will all form a part of a dual process of self-affirmation and cognitive development. This is known as additive or balanced bilingualism and is a radical departure from the restrictive models of the past."

African, European and Asian languages form the linguistic mosaic of South Africa. Most of the Gujarati speakers are proficient in English and Gujarati and are able to carry out a reasonable conversation at least in one African language. Only in the Cape province the Gujaratis use mostly Afrikaans to speak to the coloured community. In general, Gujaratis may be considered as bilinguals.

In the previous chapter I have focused on the 'Maintenance of the Gujarati language in South Africa' and illustrated the salient features that contributed to the preservation of the language. Although migrants have a loyalty to their mother tongue, as demonstrated previously, they realise that employment opportunities will only be available to those who speak and are literate in the dominant language. The Gujarati migrants therefore became literate in English so that they could succeed economically in South Africa. They provided for social mobility for their children in the host country and preserved the values and culture of the Gujarati people. Therefore bilingualism in English and Gujarati became essential from the very first generation.

Standardisation has contributed to the first and second generation Gujarati speakers speaking the same language as that of Gujarat. In the subsequent generations new (loan) words have been admitted in the lexicon through interaction with English, Afrikaans and regional African languages. **Code-mixing and code-switching** are also some of the patterns of linguistic behaviour. In the first three generations the transmission of Gujarati has been 'puristic' but the present survey reveals a change in the linguistic pattern in the subsequent generations.

The order of domains in which language shift occurs may differ for different individuals and different

groups, but most studies on immigrant minorities show that gradually over time the language of the wider society displaces the minority language, (which is) the mother tongue. There are many political, economic and social factors that cause the shift of one language to another or the use of two distinct codes in two different domains.

Gujarati community schools have played a significant role in Gujarati language literacy. In the past various difficulties had been overcome as illustrated in the previous chapter. The current challenges are of a different kind and if they cannot be met then most of the schools will face closure by the end of the century.

Finally the immigrant South African Gujaratis, like other minority communities in the world, have not been able to resist the **acculturation** process. Language and culture are said to be reciprocal and therefore it is important to examine the acculturation process.

## 5.2 BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism is regarded as a necessity by immigrant minority communities since there is a need to learn the dominant language to maintain political and economic links and they also have the loyalty to (maintain) their own language and identity. Besides, to show a simple reason for bilingualism Malik (1994:1) cites (Grosjean 1982:3) that language groups living next to each other need to communicate. Either one group will learn the language of the other group or both will learn a third language.

This has been the case with all the linguistic groups of Indian origin in South Africa. One just has to walk down the street in any "Indian" area where there are

shops belonging to Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati or Telugu speakers and the people will be heard communicating in English. The North Indian linguistic groups (Hindi, Gujarati and Urdu) with the exception of a few in the early period, did not learn any language of the South Indian linguistic group (Tamil and Telugu). In his research of the Tamil language in Natal, Murugan (1992:145) found that 78.9% claimed English as their mother tongue which indicated a language shift from Tamil to English. Prabhakaran (1991:185) describes the 'superseding of Telugu by English' as one of the causes of language shift in the Telugu community. Shukla (1995:7-8) explains that 'the increased use of English' and the 'fast fading' of Hindi led to the shift in Hindi language.

In definition of bilingualism Hoffman (1991:15) cites Bloomfield (1933:55-6):

In the cases where this perfect foreign-language learning is not accompanied by loss of the native language, it results in 'bilingualism', native-like control of two languages. After early childhood few people have enough muscular and nervous freedom or enough opportunity and leisure to reach perfection in a foreign language; yet bilingualism of this kind is commoner than one might suppose, both in cases like those of our immigrants and as a result of travel, foreign study or similar association. Of course one cannot define a degree of perfection at which a good foreign speaker becomes a bilingual; the distinction is relative.

Fishman (1972:52-3) discusses *Unstable Bilingualism* in the case of American immigrants and *Stable Bilingualism* of French speakers in Montreal. American immigrants, because they came from so many different

speech communities needed English as a *lingua franca* and a passport to social and economic advancement. There was no domain in which the ethnic mother tongue alone was required. As a result the children who had become bilingual in the family and the immigrant neighbourhood became increasingly monolingual speakers as they passed through their English speaking schools, neighbourhoods and careers. Such individuals raised their children in English. Many scholars who have carried out research in Indian Languages in South Africa (Bhagwan 1970; Mesthrie 1985; Prabhakaran 1991; Desai 1992; Murugan 1994) all agree that English became the *lingua franca* of the Indian community and a decline in the use of mother tongue was noted except in the Gujarati community, as Bughwan (1979:473) observed 'a strong pride in the preservation of the mother tongue continued for much longer in this group than most others'

*Stable Bilingualism* of French speakers in Montreal is attributed to the speakers being slowly exposed to English instruction while their elementary schools long remained entirely French. The result was that the monolingual French speaking child remained such as long as his life was restricted to home, neighbourhood and church. He became increasingly bilingual as he passed through more advanced levels of school. However, domains of English and domains of French were kept functionally separate. Gujarati in a similar situation has been better preserved than other Indian languages. Bughwan continued to this effect that "these (Gujarati) groups have been acutely conscious of religious and vernacular teaching in the schools from the outset, and research has shown that children from such backgrounds received more formal instruction in the home languages in better organised vernacular schools and with more competent staff than those of the Hindi or Tamil speaking communities". The role of vernacular schools and religion has already been

described in the previous chapters. In addition, up to now, language practices of the community have also maintained stable bilingualism which means that all things being equal Gujarati may continue to be spoken in the domains reserved for it for a long period.

Stable bilingualism may persist as long as Gujarati continues to be spoken side by side with English. The following data elicited from the present empirical survey need to be scrutinised.

**TABLE 5.1**  
**GUJARATI IN A BILINGUAL/MULTILINGUAL COMMUNITY**

QUESTION	GUJARATI	ENGLISH	AFRIKAANS
Which languages do you speak?	91.0%	92.1%	36.5%
Which language do you use most?	23.8%	88.9%	1.1%
Which language/s do you speak at home?	79.9%	92.1%	2.1%

**n==189**

Table 5.1 reveals important information of the language ability of the Gujarati community and the use of these languages. Note that since the respondents were given an option to choose one or more options the total percentage will not be 100. Besides **36.5%** who can speak **Afrikaans** language the rest of the community is definitely bilingual in **Gujarati (91.0%)** and **English (92.1%)** languages. Yet in a question of language use only **23.8%** claim they actually use Gujarati and **88,9%** mostly use English. This situation exists since there are fewer domains where the Gujaratis have the opportunity to use their mother tongue.



Although 36.5% can speak Afrikaans very few claim to use it extensively. Proficiency in Afrikaans increased after it became a compulsory language in 1961 in the state Indian schools. This is a case where a minority linguistic group was politically oppressed by a dominant elite group which is not in a numerical majority. Only civil servants, including teachers would have had the opportunity to use this language with Afrikaans speakers. Natal was predominantly English, and Indians generally preferred to use English over Afrikaans. Afrikaans was used by Indians mainly in the Cape Province and the Transvaal. A Gujarati student at a Durban university once told me that her mother who was from the Transvaal, married and living in Natal for years, spoke only in Afrikaans to her sisters over the telephone though they all could speak Gujarati. This demonstrates the type of influence Afrikaans also had on some Indians in the Transvaal.

The figures in the last row suggest that the Gujaratis (92.1%) use more English than Gujarati (79.9%) at **home**. This may indicate a threat to stable bilingualism in the future, because home is an important domain for mother-tongue usage, and suggests that a shift to English may be in progress.

Edwards (1985:71) in his brief survey of the Irish and Celtic languages pointed out that, "Bilingualism is often only a temporary phenomenon, to be replaced with dominant-language monolingualism. When a language possesses no more monoglots, the process of decline has very often begun." He supports that bilingualism can be a stable condition, but only when there exist important domains of use for each language. Presently stable bilingualism (as described in chapter 3) is observed in the Gujarati community. However, there is a danger that due to **generation shift** important

domains of use such as home and family could be encroached upon by the dominant English language.

Hoffman (1991:31) presents a **bilingual profile** which has been very useful (though I have not concentrated on all the aspects) in that instead of making people fit into previously established definitions, each individual can be measured independently. It takes account of the following variable aspects:

- 1 language development(i.e. acquisition) maintenance and/or loss of L1 and L2;
- 2 sequential relationship of L1 and L2, i.e. whether they are acquired simultaneously or subsequently;
- 3 language competence, that is, degree of proficiency in L1 and L2, and language dominance;
- 4 functional aspects of language use; what, when and to whom L1 and L2 are used;
- 5 linguistic features, such as code-switching, borrowing and interference;
- 6 attitudes towards L1 and L2, speakers of L1 and L2, and bilingualism itself;
- 7 internal and external pressures (motivational, social, psychological, perhaps others);
- 8 environmental circumstances surrounding the bilingual;
- 9 biculturalism, that is degree of familiarity with the cultures of L1 and L2.

Most scholars agree that bilingualism is a relative concept. Mackey, (1970:555) discusses this relative concept and writes that it involves the question of a) degree - how well does the individual know the languages he uses, b) function - what does he use his languages for, c) alternation - to what extent does he alternate between his languages, and d) interference - how well does the bilingual keep his languages apart or bring them together?

Very seldom can one expect a bilingual person to be completely proficient in both the languages. A person may be fluent in both languages and they may even complement each other and may overlap to varying degrees. The continued proficiency in each language will depend on the function of each language i.e. whether the person uses the language more or less at home, family, community, school, media and other.

In a typical Gujarati Hindu family, it was observed that the father, Ishwar, the head of the house speaks to his parents at home in Gujarati; to his spouse in Gujarati and English and to his children more in English and less in Gujarati. He uses both languages with his Gujarati friends and English with his other friends. Let us look at other functions in the following Table 5.2 to determine the function of each language.

TABLE 5.2

**BILINGUALISM IN GUJARATI COMMUNITY BY DOMAINS  
REPRESENTED BY A HEAD OF FAMILY**

HOME		
Parents	G	E
Spouse	G	E
Siblings	G	+E
Children	-G	+E
COMMUNITY		
Ethnic group	G	E
Religious group	+G	E
Occupation	-G	+E
Recreation	G	E
Neighbourhood	-G	+E
SCHOOL		
English medium		+E
Gujarati medium	+G	E
MASS MEDIA		
Radio	G	+E
Television		+E
Cinema		+E
Newspapers		+E
Books	G	+E
Magazines	G	+E
CORRESPONDENCE		
Relatives-India	+G	
Relatives/Friends-South Africa	G	E

+G = MORE GUJARATI THAN ENGLISH    +E = MORE ENGLISH THAN GUJARATI

-G = LESS GUJARATI THAN ENGLISH    -E = LESS ENGLISH THAN GUJARATI

G AND E = ALMOST EVEN

The domains of Home and Community provide more opportunities for the use of mother tongue. The strongest exposure to English is through the mass

media. In the early years Gujarati language was used exclusively in the Gujarati school. Now the pupils who are admitted at the age of five cannot understand instructions in Gujarati. M.K.Patel, ex-Principal of Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay, in his annual report (of 1982) for the school stated that "The young children are unable to understand even the instructions in Gujarati. Therefore the Gujarati teachers have to teach the language through the English medium." This situation has arisen because of the parents fail to transmit Gujarati to their children at home.

What is important is that the ability to speak, read and write in both languages should be such that there can be easy qualitative transmission of both languages to the next generation, hence maintaining stable bilingualism in the community.

### 5.3 CODE MIXING AND CODE SWITCHING

"**Code mixing** refers to the transition from using linguistic units (words, phrases, clauses, etc.) of one language to using those of another within a single sentence." What is interesting is that wide avenues are opened for the speaker, since the mixed elements are not restricted to a more or less limited set accepted by the speech community of the host language - on the contrary the entire second language system is at the disposal of the code mixer. (Sridhar 1989:76)

Code-mixing is different from loan words or 'borrowing' in a language. 'Borrowing' is a somewhat misleading word since it implies that something may be taken from a language for a limited amount of time and then returned. It is like borrowing books from a library. This is not true of 'borrowed' words since they are taken over permanently. Certain 'borrowed' words become part of the lexicon. Gujarati has been

influenced by English, Portuguese, Dutch, Arabic Persian, Turkish and even languages of neighbouring states in India. Some of the words from English language such as *station, ticket, hospital, cinema* and *phone* are a few examples. Some Arabic and Persian words such as *dunia, dost, dushman* and *badshah* are used frequently in Gujarati. The words *vakat* and *rena* from Tamil meaning one, two have been used for a long time in the game of 'gilli-danda' although Gujarati has its own numerals. Little did the Gujaratis realise that the game could have originated in Tamilnadu in Southern India.

Code-mixing can be used to clarify messages or for greater provision. A person may use the syntax of the English language and other units like nouns or phrases in Gujarati, or vice-versa. The following sentences are of South African Gujarati speakers who are also fluent in English. Remember that there are no capitals in Gujarati.

- 1    Today it is my turn 'to do' *arti* and give *prasad* in the *mandir*.

This sentence was spoken by a 32 year old male who seems to be more fluent in English but had to mix to be precise in his message about *arti* (swaying of a brass plate with lamps lit, before a deity, from left to right.), *prasad* (offering of material things - food etc., to deity), *mandir* (place of worship, temple). The verb 'to do' is the literal meaning of the Gujarati word *karvun*. In this case the proper English verb would have been 'to perform'.

- 2    *mare atha vage ek marriage attend karvana che.*

I have to attend a marriage at eight o'clock.

A 24 year old girl speaking to her monolingual grandmother who understands a little English. The speaker did not know the correct Gujarati word for attend.

3 A master of ceremonies at a cultural function asks the people to enter their names and addresses in a book which is placed on a trestle.

*tame main hallman trestlepar ek book josho.*

In the main hall you will see a book on the trestle. (Kendra Hall, Durban - October 1997)

The prepositions from the English sentence are changed to suit the grammar (syntax) in Gujarati. In English the prepositions come before the noun and in Gujarati the prepositions come after the noun (hence postpositions).

There are words for hall, book and trestle in Gujarati. The speaker was mixing because she was aware that the listeners were 'mixed', i.e. some spoke more Gujarati and some spoke more English and she wanted to impress them all. The exercise had the desired effect since the people were smiling and quite happy with the speaker. It was a Gujarati speakers' festival and the need to use Gujarati was met and at the same time use of English in the changing era was accommodated.

4 You see, *men kahelun ne ke te nahin ave.*

You see, I told you he won't come.

Poplack (1980), cited by Malik (1994:5), refers to the above as 'tag switching' which is inserted into an utterance. Some other examples are 'you know', 'I mean' etc.

5 Are you going to eat *dal*, *bhat* or *rotli* and *shak*?

The ethnic words in Gujarati are used for the food as it is difficult to find the correct substitutes.

Not only are units from two languages present in the same sentence, these units are integrated into a unified syntactic structure and the code-mixed sentence is meaningful and comprehensible to the addressee. This study of code-mixing is limited but

worth raising since it could generate interest for further research.

**Code-switching** involves the alternate use of two languages or linguistic varieties within the same sentence or during the same conversation. In code-switching, language changes occur across phrase or sentence boundaries. (Hoffman 1991:110).

Weinreich (1953:73) proposes, "the ideal bilingual ...switches from one language to another according to appropriate changes in speech situation (interlocutor, topic etc.) but not in an unchanged speech situation, and certainly not within a single sentence." (cited by Malik 1994:3)

Gumperz (1982:59) says "conversational code-switching refers to 'the juxtaposition of passages of speech belonging to two grammatical systems or subsystems within the same exchange. Most frequently, the alternation takes the form of two subsequent sentences as when a speaker uses a second language either to reiterate his message or to reply to someone else's statement.' (cited by Malik 1994:4).

If a person uses a word or a phrase, he has mixed, not switched. On the other hand if one clause has the grammatical structure of one language and the next is constructed according to the grammar of another language a switch has occurred.

Sridhar (1989), Hoffman (1991:109), Downes (1984:61) and Malik (1994) have all given an account of topics related to code-switching discussing them either briefly or in detail. I have referred mostly to Malik's research to discuss code-switching amongst Gujaratis in South Africa.



Bilinguals conversing informally often switch from one language to another. Haugen (1953:65) observes "speakers will often be quite unaware that they are switching back and forth. They are conscious of the bilingual speakers before them and know that whatever language they use will be understood. Only when they speak to monolinguals do they become conscious. Why do people switch and what are the reasons for switch? There are several reasons attributed for switching which are equally relevant in the situation of Gujarati-English bilinguals.

Rayfields (1970:55) makes a very pertinent point that the imperfect bilingual tries to switch the conversation to the language in which he is more proficient or comfortable. Of course, this can only happen if he/she knows that the addressee is also bilingual even if the person (addressee) is less proficient in the switched language. This situation has quite often been observed among the Gujarati-English bilinguals.

Malik (1994:16) refers to this as 'lack of registrational competence'. When speakers are not equally competent in two languages and when a speaker does not know the terms in two languages, switches take place. In certain occupations more code switching takes place e.g. doctors, engineers etc. who can talk about their jobs only in English or with a lot of code switching when a particular topic is discussed. Examine the following conversation between a doctor and a friend who are-English bilinguals.

Doctor: "Namaste, Kem cho? Majaman ne?"

(Greetings in Gujarati) How are you? well eh?)

"Did you read the article on complementary medicine in this month's medical journal?"

The pleasantries are exchanged in mother tongue and there is a switch when the topic refers to medicine in a medical English journal.

It has also been observed amongst the Gujaratis that when a speaker (competent in both languages) addresses two visitors, one (daughter-in-law from India) proficient in Gujarati and the other (sister-in-law from South Africa) fluent in both languages, switches from Gujarati to English frequently. This may sound impolite since the daughter-in-law does not fully understand English, but it is an accepted practice.

Host: (to daughter-in-law) *tame desh kyare javana?*  
(When are you going to India?)  
(to sister-in-law) Are you also going to India?

Daughter-in-law: *Maro passport taiyar thay tyare jaish*  
(When my passport is ready then I shall go.)

Sister-in-law: My baby is too small for me to go now.

Gujaratis often switch to mother tongue while talking about religion or philosophy. The following conversation is relevant to this statement.

Radha: "Savita has really suffered in the last two years. Her husband sustained multiple injuries in an accident and was confined to bed for six months."

Asha: Yes, I know. They are good people. *parantu teo karmana phal bogave che.* (they are suffering because of their past deeds, implying 'Theory of Karma').

Bilinguals switch when there is a lack of facility in one language when talking about a particular topic. They report that they switch when they cannot find an appropriate expression or when the language being used does not have the items or appropriate translation for

the vocabulary needed. A loan word may be used because there is no satisfactory equivalent (for the word *darshan*.)

e.g. This evening we went to the *mandir*. *ame bhagawanna darshan karva gayela*. (We went to pray at the temple) Literary translation would be 'we went to see God'.

One can use both languages to emphasise a point. This happens often in Gujarati-English bilinguals when an idiom or a proverb is used to emphasise a statement.

e.g. I told you he could never give up gambling. A leopard never changes its spots. *kutarani punchadi to vanki te vankij*. (A proverb in Gujarati - A dog's tail will always have a twist. One cannot straighten it,)

Code-switching also occurs when a person had to address a special audience when there are people knowing two or more languages, and again a certain language may be used to drive a particular point. Once, when addressing an audience at a Hindi eisteddfod, I had to speak on the importance of the mother tongue. It was an English school function and most of the proceedings were conducted in English. Therefore I had to begin in English and I also realised that the parents were more proficient in English. Realising the situation, and that the purpose of the function was to reinforce mother tongue learning, I had to often switch to Hindi myself to emphasise the importance of mother tongue education (*matribhasha shiksha*) for children. These are also pragmatic reasons for switching.

Malik(1994) also mentions that code-switching may occur to show identity with a group. One may tell a joke in English and give a punch line in another (mother tongue) language not only because it is better

said in that language but also to stress the fact that they all belong to the same minority group which shared experiences and values. This has been often experienced in the Gujarati community.

Bilingualism or Multilingualism has become a norm in most urban areas or cosmopolitan cities and code-switching is a common characteristic of bilingualism. Code-switching is often noticed in habitual expressions in fixed phrases of greetings (namaste) and parting (Gujarati:avajo-come again), commands and requests.

Whenever languages are in contact, one is likely to find certain prevailing attitudes of favour or disfavour towards the language involved. These can have profound effects on the psychology of the individuals and their use of the languages. (Haugen 1956:95-96) cited by Malik. (1994:19). Britain has one of the largest Gujarati speaking populations outside India. They refer to themselves as "Gujjus" rather than Gujaratis. (Naik 1997:1). In South Africa, in a similar situation, they are called 'Gujjis'. There are conflicting views about such situations and use of words, where on the one hand there are those who favour maintenance and on the other hand they are used in jest. Peer pressure on the youth is also often responsible for such attitudes.

Other aspects of code-switching that have been discussed by scholars are 'situational code-switching' and 'metaphorical code-switching'. (Downes 1984:62 and Fishman 1972:48). In the former the situation type will predict which variety a speaker will employ and in the latter it is done to create a rhetorical effect.

Fishman clarifies that "when variety switching is fleeting and non-reciprocal and is used for purposes

of emphasis or contrast rather than as an indication of situational discontinuity it is metaphorical in nature. Rayfield (1970: 56) illustrates some interesting metaphorical switches among the Yiddish speakers in Los Angeles. Gujaratis in Durban are fond of situational code switching. On many occasions when a Gujarati person is speaking on the phone using the English language, he/she immediately switches to Gujarati if someone (who does not understand Gujarati) enters the room and the speaker does not want the person to know what he/she is talking about.

#### **5.4 LANGUAGE CHANGE**

Philosophers and scholars have written extensively about continuous change in the world through the ages whether it be gradual or swift. If such change is true then language is no exception. Aitchison (1991:6) quotes Max Muller about changes in the Aryan languages who remarked that "the history of all Aryan languages is nothing but a gradual process of decay". How can Max Muller make such a comment? It is simple and an open assessment since every time there was a change the language was named accordingly. The statement is more positive than negative. (See Appendix E on Evolution of the Gujarati Language).

*Sanskrit*, which is a highly cultured classical language was structured by the famous grammarian PANINI. The first change was due to the fact that it began to be spoken in its natural form, bending some of the rigid rules of grammar attached by Panini, and hence it was called *Prakrit* conforming to the rules of *Prakriti* i.e. nature. It underwent several changes as time moved on until after over a thousand years it was called *Apabransha* meaning distorted. From it have evolved languages of more efficient and practical

structure and therefore Sanskrit still commands the respect from the scholars of modern Indian languages.

Language change has been the norm, and is acknowledged by the Gujarati proverb '*bar gaue boli badlay*' meaning the dialect changes at every twenty miles. Two major reasons, time and physical space, have been attributed to language change. Social factors such as age, status, sex, occupation etc. also affect the rate of changes. Linguistic change is a universal process. All languages are undergoing change in all periods of history.

Language Change as suggested in the **substratum theory** is that when immigrants come to a new area or when an indigenous population learns the language of the newly arrived conquerors, they learn their adopted language imperfectly. This new version is transmitted to their children and social circle and eventually there is a change. When languages are in contact for a long period, such that a community becomes bilingual, language changes do occur. An interesting example has been of the languages in contact with Kannada, a Dravidian language, and Marathi and Urdu which are Indo-European languages in the village of Kupwar in South India. (Aitchison 1991:109-110).

Natural tendencies have had repercussions on some aspects of a language. It is a natural tendency of humans to find a way out from difficult situations. The words of the Sanskrit language are complex and therefore as other languages evolved from it simpler words were 'coined'. Examine the transformation of Sanskrit words *griha* to *ghar* and *dugdha* to *dudha* and Arabic word *farka* to *faraka* in Gujarati. In the transformed words the utterance (speech) is easier than that of Sanskrit.

Ignorance and illiteracy are also said to be responsible for language change in the Gujarati language. An illiterate person learns the language by sound i.e. hearing. On many an occasion he is not able to distinguish the correct spelling. He therefore begins to utter incorrect words. Few such examples are *krisna* which becomes *krusna* or *krasan*; *vanisha* becomes *vaneshya*; *jnana* becomes *gnan*. All these are common changes in the Gujarati language. In literature the standard form is used but when the writer narrates a village dialogue the language used by the local people will be written.

The Gujarati language is also influenced by regional varieties. Those from Surat will use *kahyun* for 'said' and the Kathiwad people use *kidun*. People from Vadodara (Baroda) say *shak* for curry and those from Surat tend to change the *sha* to *ha* and say *hak* for curry.

Gujarati is predominantly a **phonetic** language and therefore serious spelling changes do not occur. The words are spoken, written and pronounced in the same manner. 'ka' is always pronounced as *ka* as in *kaput* and the 'a' will not undergo a change like the 'a' in *baby* and 'a' in *ball*. A six year old child who first attended a local Gujarati school in Durban at the age of five and mastered the Gujarati script then attended an English medium school at six.

He spelt the following English words in this way:

bich - beach  
pilo - pillow  
cuzin - cousin  
ber - bear  
hom - home  
lanch - lunch  
tedee - teddy

wer - wear

playd - played

(Viraj - (grade 1 - 22 August 1997 Durban)

He had written these words phonetically correctly as taught in the Gujarati language. Each consonant and vowel is pronounced in the same way every time. He is puzzled as to why the 'u' in lunch is not pronounced as 'oo' in ludo. As he grows up he will probably forget phonetical Gujarati once he has mastered the English language.

One has to study linguistic behaviour over a long period to observe language change. As mentioned above Gujarati has not undergone real language change in itself. However the language used 'borrowed' words from other languages such as English, Afrikaans and African languages, producing some interesting results.

One such example has been the use of the English noun 'cake'. In Natal 'cake' is taken to be a feminine noun by Gujaratis. Therefore a person would say "men ek cake banavi." (I made a cake). Here the past tense verb banavi agrees with the feminine noun - cake. The same noun 'cake' is used as a masculine noun by Gujaratis in the Eastern Cape. There a person says "men ek cake banavyo". In the same sentence the verb banavyo has to agree with the noun 'cake' now masculine. Another example is the use of the noun 'bus'. In Natal it is used as a feminine noun and one may say 'bas avi' (the bus came) and in Transvaal 'bus' is used as a masculine noun saying that 'bus avyo'. In each case the past tense verb agrees with the noun in Gender and Number.

It seems there is no fixed rule when using 'borrowed' words and that they are likely to change the syntax in the Gujarati language in each region.



Another interesting development concerning language change had occurred in the late nineteen seventies. There had been a decline in the number of pupils attending the Gujarati schools. There has also been apathy among Gujarati speakers towards the language and the peoples' attitude has been negative towards maintenance. A prominent concerned community member from East London, Mr Ramlal L. Harry attempted to modify the Gujarati language by omitting the muted and conjunct consonants from the language. He felt that the Gujarati language was difficult to write and speak because of the muted and conjunct consonants. In addition he suggested that to make the language simpler grammar should be not emphasised in the language. There should be no strict rules about the long and short vowels in the spelling of the words. This proposal was presented to the meeting of the Gujarati Maha Parishad of South Africa. He called this a 'break-through' method. (See Appendix H)

The committee commended his efforts but could not accept his proposal. There were many flaws in the proposal. Various problems encountered in the syntax could not be addressed since there were no qualified linguists who could work out the 'mechanics' of the new Gujarati language. If the language were changed then the future generation would not be able to read the rich treasure of Gujarati literature, written in the last five hundred years, which was the 'heart and soul' of the community.. The language would no more have a standard form of which the Gujaratis were extremely proud. The change in spelling could also mean a change in meaning.

### **5.5 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO LANGUAGE SHIFT**

When a community does not retain its language and gradually adopts another one, we say a language shift

has taken place. The shift is complete when one language is completely replaced by another like German has replaced Hungarian in Austria (Gal 1979) and English replaced Bhojpuri (Mesthrie 1991) in Natal. The shift can be partial or incomplete when a particular speech community continues to use the old language in specific domains while acquiring the new language.

The discussion and the data presented in the previous chapters support the hypothesis that the challenges faced by the minority status of the Gujarati community have not deterred in its attempts to maintain the mother tongue. Shift between earlier generations has been very slight. Socio-economic factors forced them to become bilingual and the pertinent issue is to investigate to what degree the bilingual parents will pass on the mother tongue to their children.

#### **5.5.1 GENERATION**

If each subsequent generation transmits its group language (mother tongue) to the next generation then the language will be maintained. In Gujarat where there are millions of monolinguals who have transmitted the language orally over centuries the language has been maintained successfully. Most of the population is rural and only a small percentage that has moved to urban areas were influenced by foreign languages e.g. English. During its history thousands were converted to Islam and Christianity, but their descendants still continue to speak Gujarati. This is contrary to the belief that the converted Christians adopt English and Muslims will adopt one of the Islamic languages. There were also Zoroastrians who were assimilated into Gujarat in the sixteenth century and their subsequent generations have continued to speak Gujarati. Generation is generally the positive

factor in the maintenance of a language where there are monolinguals.

However, it has been noted that in immigrant minorities all over the world where a language of the majority or dominant group in power was learned for the sake of economic survival, there was a shift in language from mother tongue to a host language. In each subsequent generation the shift to the dominant language and attrition of the mother tongue becomes more apparent. It has been established that the interim period which is a prerequisite to shift is a bilingual period. If it is a stable bilingualism, both the languages would be spoken continually for a long period in the domains claimed by them. If there is a change in the situation so described, then the process of shift will begin which may be very gradual and may not be noticeable for a long time. Sometimes shift occurs swiftly maybe in one or two generations. This happens when the immigrants are ready to be assimilated into the host community almost immediately due to the political-socio-economic advantages as has been noted in the United States of America.

The process of changing from one language to another does not often occur within the life span of one person: it is a matter of several generations. Since it is a gradual process, language shift has to be studied over a long period of time. The first generation immigrants in South Africa mostly used Gujarati as a medium of communication at home and in the neighbourhood. They spoke to their children in Gujarati and the children first learnt English at school. Later they began to communicate with their peers and siblings in English which was introduced into the home. Slowly they also interacted with their parents in English even if the parents could not reply in English. The parents did not object to the use of English since they desired that their children were

not deprived of the upward social and economic mobility in the host country. Often parents are proud that their children have a better command of the English language than themselves.

The children realise that the two languages have different value systems attached to them and are faced with a conflict which they resolve by choosing the dominant language or pursuing bilingualism. Lieberman and McCabe (1978:69) warn that there are a variety of factors which affect the passing of mother tongue to the offsprings. Among these are population composition, government pressure, language available for schooling, degree of fluency in the second language and intermarriage, most of which are dealt with in the previous chapters. In minority communities like the Gujaratis, most of these factors would contribute to the shift to English except for the perseverance of the members to maintain the mother tongue.

The data gathered in the following survey indicate that the parents speak more English than Gujarati to their children. Therefore lack of transmission of mother tongue from parent to children will result in Language Shift.

#### **5.5.1.1      A Sample Survey of Language Usage at Home and Mother Tongue Shift**

A sample of the pupils from standards six and seven who come from Gujarati speaking families was obtained from Sastri College, a school in Durban, Natal. The study uses 27 pupils, twenty five fourteen year old and two thirteen year old, in a primary school to survey the languages used by them, their parents and their maternal and paternal grandparents. The degree of bilingualism has also been determined in each

generation. The following six questions were asked of them.

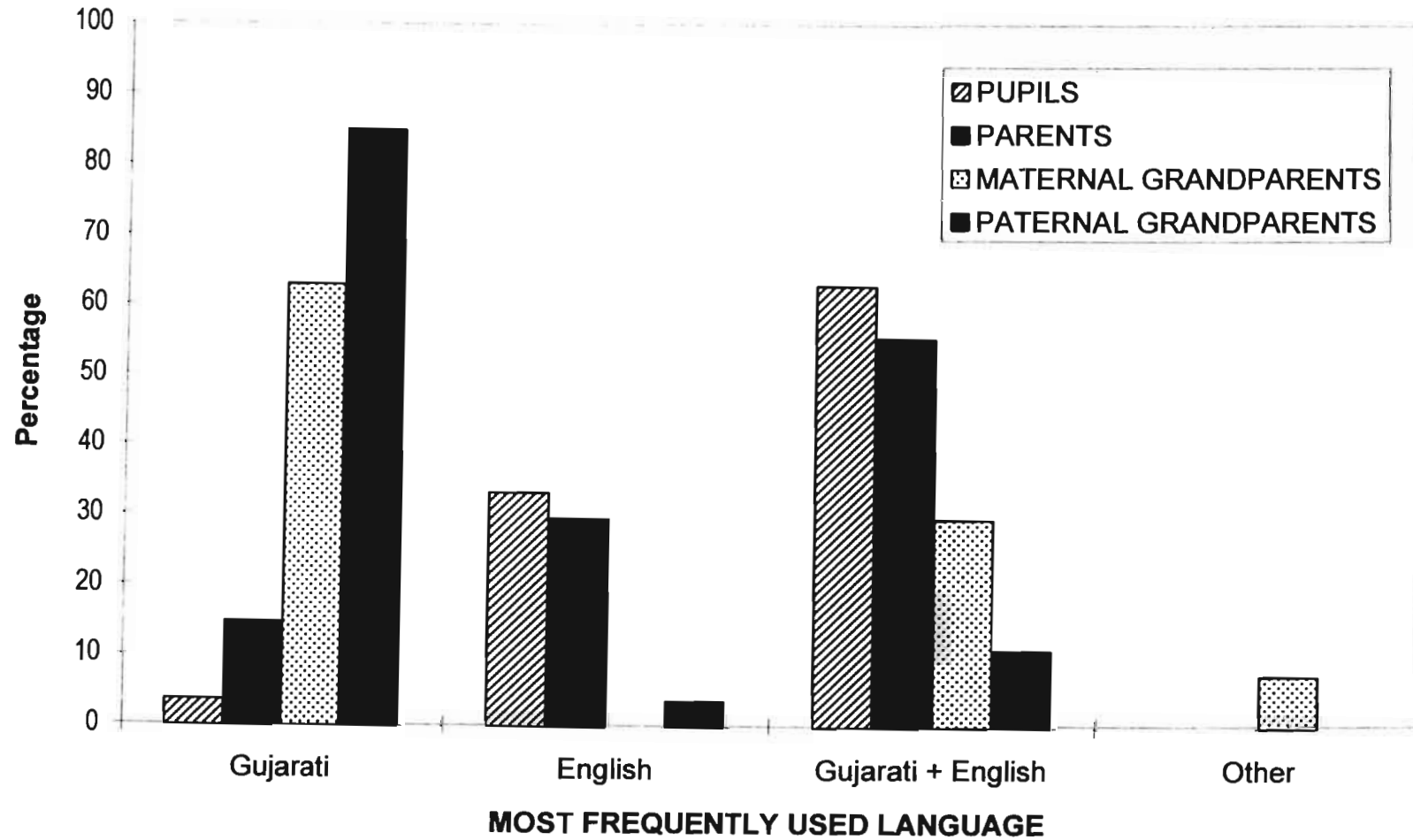
1. What language do **you use** (most frequently) at home?
2. What language do **your parents use** (most frequently) at home?
3. What language do **your maternal grandparents use** (most frequently) at home?
4. What language do **your paternal grandparents use** (most frequently) at home?
5. What language do **your parents use to speak to you** (most frequently) at home?
6. What language do **your grandparents use to speak to you** (most frequently) at home?

Before analysing the data I need to discuss certain limitations in the data. The sample derived from interviews by an assistant fieldworker is distorted by religious and regional grouping. All the children come from Gujarati Hindu families since there were no children in these classes from Gujarati Muslim families. Secondly, the data are representative of pupils from only one school in Natal. Unfortunately the data obtained from a school in the Transvaal were lost in the post and I could not trace it and there was not enough time to carry out another interview.

The first **four** questions were of a general nature to ascertain which language is most frequently used by the Pupils, Parents and Grandparents. It maybe possible that the Parents and Grandparents speak mostly Gujarati because they are unable to speak English and the same is possible about those who speak mostly English since they are unable to speak Gujarati.

In this survey language usage by domain (home) is also very clear. Language frequently used at home has a

Chart1  
Table S.4



greater chance of being maintained and transmitted to the subsequent generations. Table 5.3. and also (BAR GRAPH) shows language usage in a given domain and language shift by generation.

**TABLE 5.3**

**DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS BY LANGUAGE MOST FREQUENTLY USED BY THEM, PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS AT HOME BY PERCENTAGE.**

	GUJARATI	ENGLISH	GUJARATI+ ENGLISH	OTHER
Language most frequently used by PUPILS	3.7	33.3	63.0	0
Language most frequently used by PARENTS	14.8	29.6	55.5	0
Language most frequently used by MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS	63.0	11.0	29.6	7.4
Language most frequently used by PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS	85.0	4.0	11.0	0

Highest mother tongue retention rate is for those using Gujarati only which is 85% and 63%, amongst the Paternal and Maternal Grandparents respectively. Only 14.8% of the parents, the next generation, use Gujarati most frequently which is alarmingly lower than the first generation and this could affect the transmission of the mother tongue to their children. Finally in this sample only 3.7% of pupils, the third generation, reported using Gujarati most frequently. There seems to be a sharp decline from second

generation using mother tongue. Although this may seem a considerably lower rate, it must be noted that most of these children would be the fifth generation in South Africa since most of the Gujaratis immigrated in the early twentieth century. Therefore most of them would be bilingual by now. This notion is supported here by the 63% of pupils most frequently using both Gujarati and English, the highest rating in this survey. The tendency to become bilingual has increased in each generation. This survey also pointed out that 33.3% of the pupils, the highest rate in the survey, most frequently use English at home compared to 29.6% of parents and 3.7% of grandparents. This indicates a gradual shift to English by the third generation.

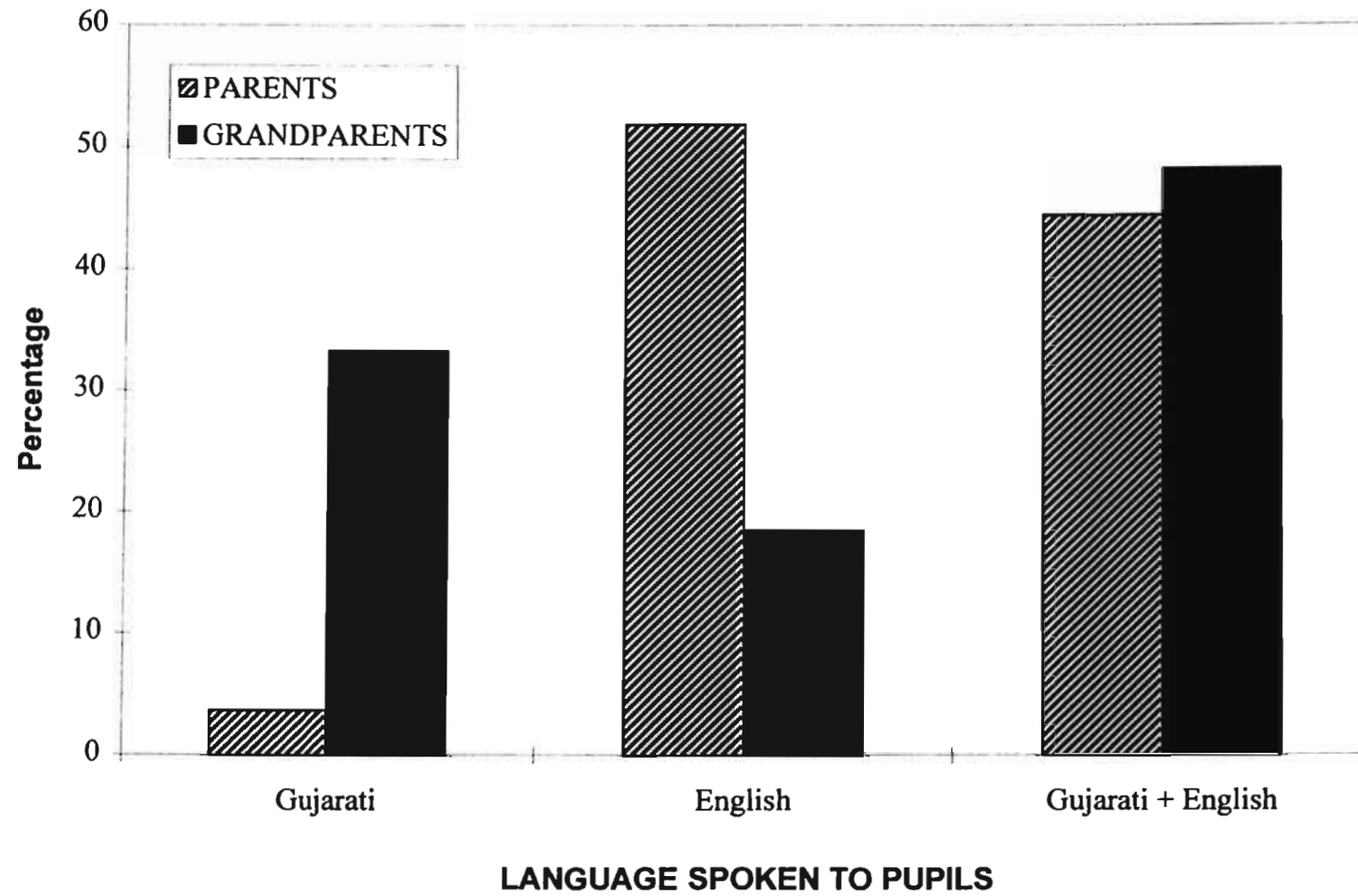
There are 7.4% of pupils who claim their Maternal Grandparents using a language other than Gujarati at home. This is probably the result of intermarriage. Intermarriage between Gujarati speakers and other linguistic groups is increasing as explained by Mr. Y.M. (37#) Mr.Y.M. said that the Hindu Gujaratis often travelled to India to have their children married since they were small in number compared to the Muslim Gujaratis who rarely went to India for this purpose.

Table 5.3 showed clear generational differences. The younger people accord competency in the English language more relevance than the Gujarati and wish to claim social status different and independent from their parents. (Mr. A.A. #35 )

In addition to the four questions asked concerning the language most frequently used, the pupils were asked two further questions about which language was most frequently used **by** parents and grandparents to address them. Table 5.4 displays the recorded data. (see also bar graph)



Table 5.4



**TABLE 5.4**

**DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS BY LANGUAGE MOST FREQUENTLY USED BY PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS TO SPEAK TO THE PUPILS AT HOME BY PERCENTAGE**

	GUJARATI	ENGLISH	ENGLISH+ GUJARATI	OTHER
Language PARENTS use to speak to pupils	3.7	51.9	44.4	0
Language GRANDPARENTS use to speak to pupils	33.3	18.5	48.2	0

The above table shows that more than half (**51.9%**) of the parents address their children in the dominant language English. Yet in Table 5.3 it was reported that only **29.6%** of parents use English most frequently at home which is less than the number using English (51.9%) to speak to their children. This means that the parents use more English with their children than with the grandparents. The new generation may be encouraged to speak more English and a gradual generation shift seems to be in process. It is also interesting to note that only 3,7% of the parents use English to speak to their children and 33.3% grandparents use exclusively Gujarati.

Yet both these generations seem to be addressing the children almost equally in both the languages, English and Gujarati. This also confirms that since 48.2% of grandparents can speak to the pupils in both languages and are bilingual they are not the first generation in South Africa. It has been established earlier that most of the first generation Gujaratis were monolinguals. The other point to note is that if both

the parents and grandparents can use both languages evenly with the children, then the new generation does understand Gujarati and the parents, 51,9% who use exclusively English, do have a choice as to the language which they can use and more of them have chosen to use English. This confirms Fishman's opinion (1966:132) that with each succeeding generation there is less mother tongue retention no matter how swift or gradual it may be.

With regard to language shift by generation Mr.Y.M. (#38) stated that the main reason why mother tongue was being lost was that now even the older generation had accepted it as 'a lost cause' and felt helpless. They could only communicate with the older generation in Gujarati. The older generation was in business and the new generation went into professions. Even those who were orthodox sent their daughters to university and as a result their social outlook had become more westernised.

Mr. U.J. (#46) a priest cum Gujarati teacher noticed that only the 1st and 2nd generation had been proficient in the Gujarati language. By the 3rd generation the use of English increased considerably since the children studied through the English medium up to Matriculation and continued up to university level. Mr.U.J. (#46) used to write a considerable amount of literature under the pen name 'Dipak' but he has discontinued knowing that no one is going to read it.

Fishman has suggested that language shift occurs via domains. Mother tongue retention is found to be strongest in the informal domains of home and family interaction. When the majority language (here English) intrudes and captures those domains reserved for the ethnic language then shift is in process. Although this has been slow in the Gujarati language we now see

in the fifth generation much more use of the English language in most of the domains previously dominated by Gujarati.

#### **5.5.2 GROUP AREAS ACT OF 1950**

Much historical and social literature is now available on the Group Areas Act. Prof. Soni (1989:127) states that "Indians have abhorred the Group Areas Act consistently for the deprivation it has created, the inhuman forced uprooting and movement it has imposed and the financial loss resulting from inadequate or negligible compensation that has followed in the wake of wasteful mobilisation of the Group Areas might." Socially there was limited inter-communal contact among the Indians, Coloureds, Whites and Africans.

The mass resettlement of people under the Group Areas Act has had such negative effects on Indians in Natal and the Transvaal that they lost confidence and hope to rebuild a society which served their needs. Although there were outspoken leaders such as Dr. Y.M. Dadoo and Dr. G.M. Naicker and there was a passive resistance campaign the community was too afraid to speak for the fear of being interrogated or being visited by the security police.

How this legislation affected the maintenance of the Gujarati language is discussed here. The Act applied throughout the country and provided for the proclamation of specific areas in which the various race groups could reside. The government gained complete control over all interracial property transactions and over the occupation of land, both for residential and commercial purposes. Pachai (1970:228).

Two major Gujarati schools in the Transvaal were directly affected by this Act. The Transvaal Hindu

Seva Samaj had built the Gandhi Hall in Johannesburg. which was the focal point for social, cultural and religious activities of the Gujarati Hindu community. On the same premises its Gujarati school called the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay was established in 1935. Between the years 1955 and 1965 it recorded the highest enrolment figures in its history and had three branches under its supervision. (See chapter 2). Unfortunately due to the Group Areas Act the property owned by the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj was zoned for white occupation and it had to be sold. Whereas there were 1041 pupils in the school in 1960 the number dropped drastically to 300 pupils in 1970. The organisation struggled to re-establish its Gujarati schools in Lenasia, the new home of the Johannesburg Indians, allocated by the government. Only in 1982 it succeeded in purchasing a property in Lenasia. In the interim period Gujarati language classes were conducted at state school premises. The society incurred further expenses when buses had to be purchased to transport children from distant residential areas to the schools.

The other major Gujarati school, the Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir established in 1936 by the Transvaal United Patidar Society faced similar problems brought about by the Group Areas Act. The teaching of the Gujarati language was disrupted and the school had to be relocated in early 1970's to Lenasia. The society was more determined than ever to maintain the language and with a great deal of effort managed to build a new school and a hall.

A very interesting case is that of a teacher Jivanjee Gopaljee who from 1952 travelled daily by train from Johannesburg to teach at the Gujarati school, Nehru Vidya Mandir, in Springs. It was a daily one hour journey which he undertook just to teach Gujarati for two and a half hours for which he earned R120 per

month. By 1970 he was forced to give up teaching at Springs since he had to move from Johannesburg to Lenasia, being affected by the Group Areas resettlement.

In Natal, the Indian community had purchased properties in Durban and built its own schools to impart mother tongue education. However, during the period of 1940-1950, the Indian community in general was faced with an acute shortage of accommodation in English schools. New schools were built for this purpose by the community and the Education Department took control of the English schools. Thereafter the schools became 'state-aided' since the government also subsidised the schools. In central Durban the Gujarati children attended the Surat Hindu State Aided Indian School for English medium education and in the afternoon the same children attended the Gujarati school on the same premises. This system worked well and the pupil enrolment in the Gujarati school reached almost a thousand in 1960. (see graph 4.1)

The Indian community in Natal faced great challenges when the Group Areas Act of 1950 was passed. In Durban area alone some 276,000 Indians were forced to leave the city and surrounding areas to settle in suburban Indian settlements such as Chatsworth and Phoenix. Mr. Y.M. (#37) explained that when the Group Areas Act was implemented the people were forced to live among their 'own people'. Then the Gujarati community indulged in 'collective bargaining' and influential Indian businessmen were able to secure areas of resettlement for their own communities e.g. the Gujaratis. Two such settlements are Effingham Heights and Parlock in northern Durban area. These events contributed to preserving ethnicity, language and culture.

The Gujarati community became scattered when they began purchasing land and settling in suburbs such as

Asherville, Overport, Isipingo, Effingham and Reservoir Hills. This exodus of the community resulted in pupils attending English schools in their new residential areas. The situation in Natal differed from that of the Transvaal. The property still belonged to the Indians in various parts of the city centre but the majority of Indian population had moved out. The number of pupils attending the Gujarati school began to decrease gradually and from 785 pupils in 1965 the number dropped to 339 in 1985.

In the Cape Province the Gujaratis faced a similar dilemma when confronted by the Group Areas Act. The communities in East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town had to move out of the city centres and settle in suburban areas allotted by the government following the implementation of the Group Areas Act. In Cape Town a Gujarati school established by the United Hindu Association in 1947 was conducted in District Six. In the late 1960's when the school was at Newlands it was expropriated and was temporarily moved to the Royal Cinema for two years after which it had to be closed. (#62 Mr. H.M.) A new school, Gandhi Memorial School was only built in 1976 at Rylands where the Indians were located. Lack of mother tongue education was experienced in the interim period when there was no proper school.

Naidoo (1989:101) comments, "The Indians have been hardest hit by the Group Areas Act. The relative success of Indians occurred not because of apartheid but *despite* severe discrimination." 86.6% of the respondents to the questionnaire of this research agreed that the Group Areas Act had been responsible for a shift in the language. 13.4% did not agree with this view.

### 5.5.3 CHANGING SITUATION IN THE COMMUNITY GUJARATI SCHOOLS

In Natal, by the eighties a significant number of Gujarati families had settled in the suburban areas to warrant the opening of a Gujarati school in six areas. The establishment of the **Gujarati Education Board** in 1988 was an indirect result of the implementation of the Group Areas Act (Desai:1992). The Indians were forced to move out of the Durban city into demarcated suburban areas. The initiative was of Nardev Vedalankar who had served and worked closely with the community for over 40 years. It was an effort to maintain close links with the Gujarati schools in the suburbs of the Greater Durban Area.

Some of the objectives of the board were: to assist in establishing Gujarati Schools in areas surrounding Durban where necessary ; to organise and establish local societies for the promotion of Gujarati education and for the promotion of activities pertaining to religion and culture and to assist them whenever need arises; to financially assist Gujarati Schools and to establish rules for the successful running of same: to set out the syllabi and to organise examinations for the Gujarati Schools; to assist Gujarati Schools in the appointment of teachers; to appoint experienced inspectors for the Gujarati Schools; to organise, assist and run training classes, refresher courses etc. for Gujarati School teachers.

The GEB agreed to assist the local societies financially for the payment of teachers' wages and in the cost of the normal running of the schools. Sixty per cent of each school's expenditure was to be borne by the two parent bodies, The Surat Hindu Association and the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj (each contributing 30%). The remaining 40% would be borne by the suburban



society. This amount was usually obtained through the fees received from each pupil either monthly or per term.

Six schools from the suburban areas and one from the city centre in Durban, were affiliated to the GEB which served as the umbrella body. Each school submits quarterly reports, quarterly draft budget, student enrolment, annual examination results and its yearly activity reports to the board (GEB). An Education Director is appointed by the Board who acts as a liaison officer between the Board and the Gujarati schools. He is required to visit the schools once every term and present to the Board a progress report and any difficulties experienced by the school.

Once again the political situation in the country has affected the community Gujarati schools. Since 1994 when the country abandoned apartheid policy and declared a full democracy the community has undergone many changes. The Indian community is now able to make its own choices in matters of politics, purchasing property, schooling and all else it had been deprived of during the apartheid era. While the African pupils flooded previously established Indian schools, the Indian pupils moved to the previously established 'Model C' or white schools. The whole structure of society seemed to be under transformation. Gujarati schools became more and more deserted. From the seven schools under the supervision of the Board only three are active.. Even in these schools there has been a drastic reduction in the number of pupils in the last five years. The parents and pupils complain of the extra curricular activities in the 'Model C' schools which does not leave any time to devote to the learning of the Gujarati language.

In the Transvaal and the Cape there seems to be a similar situation. The Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay has also

closed its several branches and presently it has only one branch operating with less than one hundred pupils attending the school. All the school committees are exploring new teaching methods which will interest the pupils and attract them to the Gujarati school.

Most of the administrators and principals of the schools reported (through questionnaires) that the decrease in the number of pupils was due to the following reasons:

- 1 lack of interest due to teaching methods
- 2 overlapping of times between English government schools and Gujarati schools
- 3 lack of teachers' training
- 4 lack of motivation from parents
- 5 lack of funds and facilities
- 6 lack of education in Gujarati of present generation parents who in turn do not encourage their children
- 7 teachers are not motivated since they are poorly paid and there is no good future prospect in this field
- 8 children do not find Gujarati being used anywhere except at Gujarati school and therefore lose interest

The chairman of the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj, R B Master reported in the school's annual brochure that "The standard of Gujarati education has dropped. One chief reason is lack of trained teachers. The male trained teachers who were imported from Gujarat, India left the teaching profession due to low salary scale and went into other occupations where they earned more. As a result female teachers, mostly unqualified, were employed. Even they left the school when they found a better paid job."

Other positive steps recommended by the principals that could be taken to create an interest after considering the above were:

- introduce culture with Gujarati language
- introduce cultural classes after primary school for senior students
- introduce student exchange programmes with India
- provide English-Gujarati dictionary and train them to use it every day at school

Most people favoured the teaching of the Gujarati language at community schools compared to state schools because they felt that Gujarati will only be taught as a language at state schools whereas at community schools culture and religion can be taught through the Gujarati language and they supported this idea. Peer pressure will be positive when all the children are learning the same language at Gujarati school.

Initially the Gujarati families, most of whom lived in the city centres were forced to move out to suburban areas due to the Group Areas Act. However they were still grouped together (even in pockets) as an Indian community. After the new democracy the Gujarati families are once again moving out, this time voluntarily, to formerly 'white' residential areas. This has made it difficult for them to reach the 'old' established Gujarati schools. A change in demography has affected the running of the Gujarati schools.

In the community Gujarati school which is one of the strongest domains the teachers and principals are in despair due to the changing situation, An ex-principal Mr. M.K.P. (#44) expressed, "For our children, growing up in the environment here, the Gujarati language instead of being a mother tongue is becoming a foreign language. It is becoming a difficult task for the

teachers to teach Gujarati in the schools. They have to teach the pupils Gujarati through the English medium."

The improved facilities in education over the years, the struggle for upward economic mobility and social status led to the English language being adopted. English replaced Gujarati as the first language. The lack of economic value has proved to be one of the key factors in the decline of the Gujarati language. Most of the teachers who were brought to South Africa to teach Gujarati left the school once the contract had expired and went into other fields where they could secure more income.

The Lenasia Yuvak Mandal, a very vibrant Gujarati youth organisation in the Transvaal has been very active in recent years in reviving culture, language and religion in the community. In its Silver Jubilee (1969-1994) report the following observations were made concerning the situation of the Gujarati language in South Africa:

1 "Poorly paid teachers in many cases receiving less than R200 p.m. have to continue with the task of teaching Gujarati to the pupils. With such a structure where the schools have to budget for a deficit of R1000 p.m., it is no wonder that Gujarati education is bound to fail.

2 Methods used in the village schools in India years ago still pertain. No innovative or creative approaches to tackle the problem that 'Gujarati for the majority of our children is a second language' are made.

3 The response to the offer to have Gujarati taught as a language in the state school was also not

successful because there was no sufficient demand from the community.

The youth group tries to publish Gujarati lessons in each of its issues to teach the Gujarati language. (See Appendix x)

#### **5.5.4 ACCULTURATION**

For immigrants who have become bilinguals acquiring the dominant language of the host country, the two languages fulfill different roles and functions. Usually the use of mother tongue belongs to those domains initially not penetrated by the host language e.g. home, family, friends from old country and others. These relations can change over a period and the re-distribution of these languages in relation to cultural spheres will probably determine the immigrants degree of assimilation in the host country. It has also been observed that the degree of assimilation may not be same for all the members of the family. Often parents are concerned about their children's change in cultural practices and habits.

In this survey the respondents were asked if the 'increased adoption of western ideas and culture' had contributed to the decreased use of the Gujarati language in the last thirty years. **92.6%** of the respondents agreed with this assertion while only **1.6%** disagreed and 5.8% did not respond.

Mr Y.M. (#37) related an incident which occurred when he visited Cape Town many years ago. The Gujarati language had disappeared long ago in the Malay community since the members had been assimilated in the 'coloured' community and had adopted their culture. Mr.Y.M. (#37) met a Malay resident who was able to speak to him in Gujarati. The aged resident

because he explained that he had not had an opportunity to converse in Gujarati to anyone in the past half a century since those Malays who had spoken Gujarati could not be identified any longer and they now spoke only Afrikaans.

On acculturation Rayfield (1970:43-47) comments that the process of acculturation is not purely passive and that the immigrant is able to decide to a certain degree how much of the new culture he will accept and how much of the old culture he will retain. He studied a group of Yiddish-speaking Jews in a low-income suburb of Los Angeles. He investigated the social factors which may influence the individuals language habits. In this study he discusses some of the criteria for assessing the degree of acculturation. I will apply some of these criteria to determine the acculturation process in the Gujarati community.

The attitudes of immigrants towards Gujarati culture and in particular towards Western culture may determine their attitudes towards the use of the English language. The immigrant Gujaratis had the knowledge of and pride in their history, philosophy and religion which has been evident in their cultural activities. The Hindu Gujaratis regard religion or 'dharma' as a way of life and they followed the scriptural teachings which advocated the varna system (see chapter 3) and the ashrama system (4 stages in the life-span of a person) and the exposition of ethics and morals. The Muslim Gujaratis' culture was based on the teachings of Islam.

The early Gujarati immigrants believed that they were superior to the indentured labourers since they were literate in their mother tongue and more advanced socio-economically. They zealously guarded their cultural practices. They traded with European wholesalers some of whom became their firm friends

Mr.V.N.N.(#6) and respected the culture of their business counterparts. Since only the men were involved in the business they learned the English language and the women and the girls spoke only Gujarati.

In recent times a Hindu Gujarati attorney, Mr. J.B.Patel (1989:277) explained, "The different linguistic groups, however, still retain the various customs which have been passed on from generation to generation as far as their social and religious practices are concerned.....Although the younger generation is able to read and write in the vernacular, they are loath to use it and prefer to use the medium of English at home."

Another member of the Indian community (of indentured stock) Mr. J.N. Reddy (1989:279) was of the opinion that, "the Indian community is westernised to the extent necessary for it to compete and survive in a country in which economic and social norms are predominantly Western. Education being Western-orientated is an inherent danger to Indian cultural life generally. The younger generation of Indians, except for those in the Gujarati Hindu and Gujarati Muslim community, hardly converse in their mother tongue."

Mr I.K.(#39), a successful Muslim businessman reflected that his great-grandfather and grandfather were only literate in the Gujarati language and still were very successful businessmen. They kept their accounts books in the Gujarati language. The traditional culture and religion were passed on to them through the Gujarati medium. Today Mr. I.K. speaks very little Gujarati and his grandchildren understand but cannot speak Gujarati. Are English speakers financially more successful today? Mr.I.K.(#39) agrees and adds that

because of that they are becoming more westernised too.

*Religious orthodoxy* may indicate minimal acculturation and correlate with interest in the vernacular. Few Hindu Gujaratis and almost none of the Muslim Gujaratis have converted to Christianity. Therefore one finds these groups to be more conversant in the mother tongue. Most of the converted Indians are of the indentured group of immigrants. They are proud of being proficient in English and some view the Indian language with contempt. Some attitudes to food in the Hindu Gujaratis correspond to *religious* beliefs. Vegetarian food is always served to the guests at weddings and religious festivals.

*Kinship* relationships are strong within the Gujarati community. Unlike the western custom there is a close bond in the 'personalised' relationships. Therefore specific Gujarati words are used to address a relative even when conversing in English. Mother's brother is *mama* and father's brother is *kaka*. Mother's sister is *masi* and father's sister is *foi*. General words like uncle and aunt are seldom used unless when being introduced to a non-Indian.

Western culture has had a great influence on the *attitude to food and dress* amongst the South African Indians. More than a century of exposure to diverse cultures has had a measure of impact on the traditional habits of the Gujarati community. Even though eating habits may have undergone changes the community still favours traditional foods such as *roti*, *dal*, *curry* and *rice*. There is still no substitutes in English for foods such as *kadi*, *roti*, *dal*, *sambhar*, *dhokara*, *puri* and *patara* and sweet delicacies like *jalebi*, *basudi*, *shrikanda*, *ladoo* and many others. Although the younger generation had adopted the western style of dressing, traditional *sari* and *panjabi* are still regarded as elegant.



With cross-cultural influences *inter-marriages* are being accepted though not without resistance from the parents. It has been mentioned that because of separate linguistic backgrounds in inter-marriages the couple adopt a third language (English in this case) for communication. The children are also brought up as English monolinguals rather than multilinguals. Most of the respondents (75.1% )agreed that inter-marriages contributed to the loss of the Gujarati language. 12.2% did not agree and 12,7% did not respond to this question. Those who do not agree probably feel that the community is still endogamous in its practices and a very small percentage marry outside the Gujarati community.

Since their arrival in South Africa the Gujaratis have moved very slowly towards accepting western concepts and style of living. They may sit at a table for lunch (giving up the habit of sitting cross-legged on the floor) but will still eat *roti* and *curry* and talk about the food being *tikhu* and not pungent. This process of acculturation was relatively slow in the first generations, who arrived at different periods, and who resisted change. Kuper (1960) dicusses a list of multiple factors that were important to the Indian way of life and were continued in practice.

When Gandhi refused to remove his turban in a Durban court it was culturally correct for the Indian and incorrect for the European. This incident made the Indians respect their own socio-cultural practices. Yet the forty years cultural boycott (of South Africa by India) and other important factors like economics and education has increased the pace of acculturation. When education became compulsory for Indian children they were exposed to eurocentric ideals and emphasis was laid on proficiency in English. There seems to be correlation between language and culture. The longer the language was maintained the slower the process has

been and the quicker the English language was learned the faster the process of acculturation has been observed. Murugan (1994:138) states "Westernisation was also a major factor in the decline of the Tamil language." The loss of Tamil language has been quicker than that of the Gujarati language.

It has been often said that in the Indian community the women are the custodians of the mother tongue and religion. In the early years of immigration girls were not readily allowed by their parents to attend formal schools. It has been reported by Kichlu (cited by Chattopadhyaya (1970:289) that in 1927 only 1,650 girls out of a total enrolment of 9,477 Indian pupils attended state-aided schools and that only 46 went beyond Standard VI. The parents sent girls to Gujarati schools and were content since very few females entered any occupational field. The girls were also married at an early age and had no opportunity to attend secondary school. Therefore males were more proficient in English than females. This remained a norm in the Indian community until the government introduced compulsory education for boys and girls. After completing Matric the girls influenced by western culture entered university colleges. Ramphal (1989:75) discusses the changing role of women within the Indian community which is pertinent to all the linguistic groups.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

Indian immigrants of several linguistic groups left the regions where their languages were spoken by the majority and for economic reasons moved to South Africa where their languages did not serve them any longer outside their group, and they had to adopt the dominant English language of the host country.

The factors in the decline of a minority language are multiple and varied. As the community begins to be assimilated there are changes in the linguistic patterns. No single cause can be attributed to the change but a number of events taking place in a complex social situation result in attrition. Few states encourage the learning of minority languages as part of the school curriculum. In South Africa the state did not have an education policy for the Indians, even to learn the dominant language English, until the Cape Town Agreement in 1927.

In the meantime the Gujarati children were taught their mother tongue in well organised community schools. When they received proper English education they became bilinguals and took the English language home.

Bilingualism has to be a prerequisite to shift. It has been stated that bilingualism does not inevitably lead to shift but very few cases of 'stable bilingualism' have survived. Unless they receive good-quality bilingual education the survival of the first language will be in question. In the 'generation' survey with children it became clear that the parents although being bilingual address their children more in English than in Gujarati.

The network of community run Gujarati schools had worked very efficiently for over a century and for most of the period was a strong contributory factor to Gujarati Language Maintenance. In the past decade the number of pupils attending Gujarati schools has declined to an all time low level. I have probed into the present situation and discussed the reasons for the change.

Code-mixing and code-switching are normal when languages are in contact and sometimes it even

Code-mixing and code-switching are normal when languages are in contact and sometimes it even confirms the proficiency of the speakers in both languages. Yet if what Raymond proposes, viz. that the imperfect bilingual tries to switch the conversation to the language in which he is more proficient or comfortable then the stable bilingualism may be in doubt.

Finally the factors that have contributed to 'imperfect' shift or '50% shift' cannot be reversed. Consider the repercussions of the Group Areas Act which cannot be undone. The minority status is not going to change as according to predictions by The Urban Foundation showed a decrease of the Asian population from 3% of the total population of South Africa in 1980 to 2% in 2010.

Mesthrie (1996) predicts that 'the Indian languages of South Africa are all in danger of obsolescence' and to counteract this phenomenon he presents a comprehensive discussion on Reversing Language Shift (RLS). It is an 'action -research' related approach that seeks to take stock of the situation and make proposals towards encouraging language maintenance. It proves to be a very encouraging and 'have no illusions about it' kind of proposal which can assist the communities which are determined to learn important lessons and attempt reversing Language Shift.

## CHAPTER 6

### GUJARATI LITERATURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to assess accurately the extent of literature written in the Gujarati language without an extensive investigation. South African literature in Gujarati has not yet been studied seriously by any scholar. This may be a first attempt at such an investigation and as such there are bound to be shortcomings. Since language is directly related to literature and that Gujarati language has been successfully maintained over a century in South Africa it is reasonable to expect a body of literature written and published in this language. At the beginning of the twentieth century publishing in the Gujarati language was easier since the community had been able to maintain strong links with the mother country and therefore facilities of the press were available to them in India.

Within a few years of immigration the community made attempts to publish articles in Gujarati in South Africa. The International Printing Press started by Madanjit Vyavaharik was the first to publish material in Gujarati. Its most important publication was the weekly 'Indian Opinion' whose first editor was M.H.Nazar, a journalist trained in Bombay University who worked in consultation with M.K.Gandhi. Although it was first published in 1903 in the English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil languages, after 1905 the sections in Hindi and Tamil were discontinued. Gandhi made a great contribution to the paper, firstly financially then by writing articles for the paper in the Gujarati language.

Other noteworthy efforts to publish in Gujarati were made by 'Indian Views' which served the Muslim community; Hindu owned Universal Printing Works in Durban; and L.Harry's Printing Press in East London. They all published in English as well. There were still very limited printing facilities and the people produced handwritten copies of work which was photocopied and then bound into little booklets.

Since the first Gujaratis came as traders, as discussed in the second chapter their primary objective was to become financially successful. Little attention was given to arts since the climate was not 'conducive' to it. The community was still grappling with the new environment and struggling to find its 'niche'. Most of the literature was produced in this country by people who were born and educated in India. These members of the community continually inspired the people to write in their mother tongue. However, this did not gain any momentum until schools were established, since publishing was not economically profitable.

"The most significant works in our modern literature continue to 'cling' to the community even while they thoroughly critique it." (Jaidev 1994:v). Gandhiji had also advised the laureates of Indian literature to write for the people and of the people they served. This is also the Marxist view that true literature is that which is written for the proletariat. There were few like K.M.Munshi who did oppose this view.

Gujarati literature also followed the style developed by pioneers of Vedic literature and the Sanskrit language. The true essence of literature is captured in Acharya Vishvanatha's words '*vakyam rasatmakam kavyam*' meaning *rasa* is the soul of literature. Here the word *kavyam* although meaning poetry should be interpreted as literature since in the ancient times

it was used to incorporate all creative literature. In a simple analogy *bhasha* (language) was described as the body, *alankar* (figures of speech) or jewels which adorned the body and ***rasa*** as the soul of the body without which the language would be dead.

There has been various definitions of *rasa* but the simplest way to describe it would be to say that *rasa* is the heartfelt 'sentiment' or 'feeling' expressed in the main theme of the work to evoke an emotion. Bharatmuni the author of *Natyashastra* (exposition of performing arts) lists the basic *rasas* in the following Sanskrit couplet cited in Panday (1996:9).

śṛṅgārḥāsyakarūṇa rudravīrā bhayānakāḥ  
bibhatsādbhṭasañjau cetyaṣṭau nātyerasāḥ smṛtāḥ.

(Natyasastra: 1.6.15)

The translation of the above couplet would be:

love, humour, pathos, anger, valour, terror,  
disgust and wonder are eight (basic) *rasas* that  
support performing arts.

A ninth *rasa* *śānta* (peace) and tenth *rasa* *bhaktī* (devotion) had been added at a later date.

Some of these *rasas* have formed the basis of Shakespeare's themes of his plays. Compare *Romeo and Juliet* (love) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (humour).

The modern writers of Gujarati literature though influenced by English literature have followed the Indian tradition and produced a volume of literature which is qualitative and quantitative. Nilsson (1992:316) explained that the aim of the new education policy which was decided in 1835 for schools and colleges in India was 'to create a section who was Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in

opinion and in morals and intellect'. This group of intellectuals of that era suffered from a deep inferiority complex and tried to imitate the western scholars. The first of the modern Gujarati poets, Narmad, who started out to reform society through his writing and free the community from its orthodox beliefs, eventually abandoned all his ideas of reform and reverted to the traditional system. The Gujarati emigrants clung to their traditional role yet risked being ostracised from their community and dared to go to a foreign country for a better life.

It is gratifying to note that in spite of the difficulties experienced by the Gujarati immigrants a fair amount of literature has been found to exist. In view of the political, economic, religious, cultural and social development of the Gujaratis in this country I classified the literature under such subheadings. Simultaneously I have also tried to maintain the chronological order.

## **6.2. POLITICAL LITERATURE**

It was inevitable that political literature would have been written by the Indians since they became actively involved in the protests against political oppression. 'Apartheid' was a term used much later to describe racial segregation imposed by legislation. Initially the term 'colour bar' was commonly used to signify discrimination on the bases of colour of the people. The Europeans described as 'whites' perceived themselves superior to all the others whom they described as 'non whites'. This is the theme of the book '*koi gora koi kala*' published by G H Patel in 1958. (see section 6.4.2. in this chapter)

The first Gujarati academic to protest about the political discrimination in Natal was MK Gandhi who



came to South Africa in 1893. He was described as an astute politician by the British and is said to have shaken the foundations of the British rule in India with his weapons of *satyagraha* and *ahimsa*. He was a prolific author and although he did not write 'creative' literature like poetry and stories he influenced the writers of modern Gujarati literature. This period (1920-1947) in Gujarati literature is known as the 'Gandhian Age'. He introduced a new style in writing. His language is direct, clear and unsophisticated. By its simplicity it acquires the desired penetrating effect. His sentences are short and to the point, which could be comprehended by the 'majdur' or working class.

Gandhi inspired the people to write in their mother tongue. His convictions about the mother tongue are well known. In his autobiography (1945:381) he writes:

"It has always been my conviction that Indian parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their country. They deprive them of the social and spiritual heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit for the service of the country. Having these convictions I made a point of always talking to my children in Gujarati ..this happened twenty years ago (1905) and my convictions have only deepened with experience (1925)".

Gandhi's foremost contribution to Gujarati literature was the 'Indian Opinion' in which he wrote hundreds of articles in Gujarati concerning the injustices suffered by the Indian community. He invited the Gujaratis to contribute articles written in Gujarati for the Indian Opinion. Although political affairs of the time dominated the newspaper there were many

articles relating to the moral and ethical values aimed at uplifting the community. Gandhi translated Ruskin's 'Unto this Last' into Gujarati and called it 'Sarvodaya'. After he left South Africa in 1914 he contributed a great volume of literature mostly in the form of letters and essays in Gujarati.

**PRANSHANKAR SOMESHVAR JOSHI**, (P.S. JOSHI) a name little known to the present generation , had served this country (South Africa) during his youth and middle age. He had the courage to fight relentlessly and resolutely the political oppression by the governments of South Africa during the period of his stay in this country. He was born in Jetpur, Gujarat in 1897 and came to the Transvaal in **1920**. He served as a schoolteacher in an English-medium school in Johannesburg. He voluntarily and selflessly plunged himself in the political struggle of the Indians and exposed the tyranny of race discrimination against all the races by the 'white' government. His mission has also been referred to as 'Jehad against Colour Bar'.

Most of Joshi's books were written in Gujarati which were later translated into English by himself. He was described as a journalist and his writings were always in demand. This was due to his integrity in reporting correct information on political and social events. In 1926, impressed by Rev.C.F.(Dinbandhu) Andrew's book 'Claim for Independence' he translated it into Gujarati under the title **svatantratano davo**. He contributed regularly to the 'Indian Opinion' and the 'Indian Views'. In 1932 Joshi was instrumental in establishing the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj and served as its first secretary. Since then he became directly involved in the social affairs of the Gujarati community.

Joshi's first original historical book in Gujarati **rangdveshno durga** was published in **1936** and he himself

translated it into English in 1938 and called it the Tyranny of Colour. It is a study of the "Indian Problem" in South Africa. In its conclusion he wrote:

"The Union Government should gradually repeal all anti-Indian measures. The Indians should be rewarded the franchise, unrestricted rights of land ownership, and freedom of trade. The Union Government cannot keep cultured Indians without the right to vote. They cannot disallow the land ownership of Indians who are permanent residents of South Africa."

The Censor Board of South Africa placed a ban on Tyranny of Colour and some 200, copies were confiscated and burned. Nevertheless Joshi's fame as a writer brought him into prominence. The renowned modern Gujarati author Jhaverchanda Maghani wrote that Joshi possessed all the qualities needed to be a capable writer of literature. In 1938 Sadhu Vasvani's 'Krishna's flute' was translated by Joshi which was called *krishna bansi*.

Another Gujarati book by Joshi *daksin afrikani rangbhumi* (South Africa's land of colour) was published in 1944. This book served as a finale of the Tyranny of Colour. The author discusses the social and economic problems of the Indians in South Africa. He recollects his memories of the thirteen years spent in a foreign country. In 1945 'Verdict on South Africa' a book written in English by Joshi was published in Bombay.

In 1947 he wrote *british shahivadni janjiro*, in Gujarati, meaning 'The chains of the British Imperialism'. K.M.Munshi, a world renowned author of Gujarati literature commented that Britain had played a significant role in the history of India and other countries in the world and Joshi has illustrated this

development very clearly and it will serve as a useful book in history.

The three subsequent books by Joshi, 'Apartheid in South Africa'(1950), 'The Struggle for Equality'(1951) and 'Resurgent India'(1953) all written in English were duly published. Between 1926 and 1953 within a span of 17 years Joshi published 11 books in Gujarati and English. It is little wonder that when Joshi desired to visit India when his wife was ill, the government impounded his passport in custody and accused him of political treason charging him on four counts which were (i) participating in political activities by way of speeches in Hyderabad during his visit to India, (ii) accompanying Reverend Michael Scott and Dr.Yusuf Dadoo all over the Union to deliver lectures against the government (iii) for writing political literature (iv) carrying out activities harmful to South Africa. He was under 'House Arrest' and therefore decided to leave South Africa in **1957** and continue his work in India. In India he wrote and published two Gujarati books *afrikani mahakranti* (Great Revolution of Africa) and *vishvana mahan dharmo* (Great Religions of the World) and 'Unrest in South Africa' written in English.

On Joshi's 75th anniversary Desai(1971:170) wrote:

"Shri Joshi's fine career as a journalist has left an indelible impress on his books on various subjects as a writer of strength and conviction....The versatile author deserves to be congratulated for his lovely Gujarati prose that beams with the idiom and richness indigenous to the language, such as could be coveted by a protagonist of the language who sees the summum bonum of the Indian nation only in the use of vernacular and disparages English."

### 6.3 RELIGIO-CULTURAL LITERATURE

**LALLO HARRY** often referred to as *sant hari* was born in India in 1896 and after receiving primary education came to South Africa at the age of 14 in 1911 and settled in East London. At an early age he joined his father in business and therefore was unable to attend English school. As a youth he participated in the social and cultural activities of the community. He engaged in self-study and spent his time continually in the company of scholars such as Swami Bhavani Dayal, Swami Adhyanandji and Pandit Harishankar Vidyardhi. Since L. Harry's occupation was that of a shoemaker he wrote under the pen name of *upankar* meaning shoemaker. Later he wrote under the pen name 'Lahari'.

Lahari led a very religious life and therefore religion was his theme in his literature. He was widely read and had a good command of the Gujarati language. He established a printing press at home through which he published all his religious literature. He wrote poetry in the form of *bhajans* (devotional songs) and had his works published in many a leading monthly Gujarati publication such as 'Akand Anand' from Gujarat and local magazines. His essays on religion have been collected and published in the books *jivansadhana* and *jyanlahari*. The other two books *kirtan manjari* and *lahari vandana* are a collection of bhajans and kirtans. He gave expression to his intense devotion to God by 'dipping' his compositions in *bhakti rasa* (the devotional sentiment).

**NARDEV VEDALANKAR** was born in 1915 in Tundi, a village near Surat in India. He graduated at the Gurukul Kangari in Haradwar with a 'Vedalankar' (jewel of the Vedas) title and was a scholar of Sanskrit, Hindu scriptures and Comparative Religious Philosophy. In

1947 he came to Durban as a Gujarati teacher. Since he was proficient in both the Hindi and Gujarati languages he worked with both the linguistic groups. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh of South Africa was established in 1948 by him to coordinate education in the Hindi language. He wrote books in Gujarati and Hindi for the schools to suit the South African environment. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Maha Gujarati Parishad in 1975.

Pandit Nardev as he is popularly known since he was a Vedic practising priest, has written several religious books in the Hindi and Gujarati languages. His books serve a twofold purpose. First they are used for religious instruction in Hinduism and secondly as informative religious literature. He presents the tenets of Hinduism in an intellectual style and provides a rational view of Hinduism.

His Gujarati religious publications include:

*Dharma Shiksha Pathavali* Parts 1-3

*Lagnano Adarsha*

*Samajik Margadarshika*

He compiled the *Arya Upasana* Aryan Prayer in Gujarati-English useful for Hindu religious rites.

*Dharma Shiksha Pathavali* has been written in a narrative form and contains lessons in Hindu philosophy, concept of God and culture. There are also lessons in moral values and ethics which can be described as 'right living' which help to build a strong and good character in a person. These books became very valuable and useful to the Hindu Gujarati community and are being used by almost all the Gujarati schools across South Africa and even across the borders.

Pandit Nardev did not write any creative literature but like Gandhi he wrote numerous articles and hundreds of letters to people all over the world who sought his advice on topics pertinent to daily matters. He wrote a series of books on Hinduism in English and a set of religious tracts. The Gujarati societies regularly invited him to contribute to their annual publications. He researched social topics with a view to bringing reform in the community and presented them at local conferences. The following papers are some of the many that invoked deep thought.

- *gnationi utpatti ane teno vikas*  
(the birth of caste and its development)
- *dakhina afrikaman jati sansthaos ane antar jatiy lagno*  
(caste organisations in South Africa and intermarriages among them)
- *gujarati samajni jati sansthaos, temna fundo ane temnun bhavishya*  
(Gujarati caste organisations, their funds and their future)

On his passing away in 1994 hundreds of tributes were received and one paragraph of a tribute from a Gujarati society in the Cape, The Cape Cultural Society describes in brief his contribution:

"Writer of texts so profound. Teacher of the faith eternal, pragmatic and sound.

What debt of gratitude shall Sanskrit, Hindi and Gujarati speak?

Will not their poetry, sweet song and dance granted lease of life upon this Land cry out in acclaim profuse."

**MOHANLAL BALSARA** started his literary career at the Gujarati library of the Port Elizabeth Khatriya Mandal. He was an avid reader and he greatly improved his knowledge of the Gujarati language. Born in India in 1913 he accompanied his father to South Africa in 1926 and was educated in English to primary school level. Influenced by the principles of the Arya Samaj he became active in community organisations in Port Elizabeth. Serving as an honorary secretary of the Kshatriya Mahasabha for about fifteen years he gained invaluable experience writing the minutes in Gujarati.

Balsara devoted his time to preparing the history of the Kshatriya (previously known as Mochi - of shoemaker occupation) group of Gujaratis who settled in South Africa. He prepared literature on social reform which included topics such as benefits of unity, education and religion. Booklets on the aforementioned topics were sent to each home. His 'new' ideology hoped to remove orthodox traditional practices and he condemned meaningless customs and on the whole contributed to the 'awakening' of the society. He proved that the pen was mightier than the sword in reforming a conservative society. Balsara believed that the only way to bring reforms was by educating the people.

The community rewarded him for his tireless efforts by presenting him with medals. In India he was awarded a medal and citation for his work and was referred to as '*adarsha lekhak*' (ideal author). Some of his original writings include:

- *anantna tapasvi* - a short story on Buddha's teachings
- *bhagna hridayi kalapi* - a short account of poet Kalapis emotional turbulence in his life and its effect on his poetry



- *apna vadilono itihas - ansuno itihas* - an account of the tearful, moving history of the kshatriya caste
- *dakshin afrikana gujarationun sammelan* - a detailed account, with comments, of the First National Gujarati Convention (1975) in South Africa
- *siddharthano mahatyag* - a narrative poem on the renunciation of Buddha (giving up his family in search for nirvana)
- *yogi lucien* - a brief account of an Afrikaaner youth who gave up christianity to become a Hindu.
- *dahshin afrikaman kshatriya vasahatni shatabdi* - Kshatriyas' 100 years in South Africa

After the demise of Balsara his works have been systematically filed and kept in a safe place and only some of them have been published. The family and the community hope to publish more of them in the future.

As it had been customary to invite and appoint trained teachers from India in the Gujarati schools, **UMIASHANKAR M JOKHAKAR** was appointed at the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya in Johannesburg in 1950. He was the last of the teachers to be brought to this country since the government did not grant permission for importing any more teachers. He was born in 1913 in Surat and obtained his Senior Teachers Diploma at the P.R. Training College in Ahmedabad. Although Jokhakar also wrote poetry he contributed a great deal more like his contemporaries to religio-cultural activities.

*Ishvarprasad* is a collection of hymns from the Veda and the Gita and of *bhajans* and *dhoons*. It was compiled by Jokhakar and was published in 1953 and has gone into the third edition. He has written several essays on religion and language which have been

published in local and overseas magazines. His outstanding contributions are:

- *gujarati bhashani upayogita ane teni jalvani*  
(use of the Gujarati language and its maintenance)
- *apano varso*  
(our heritage)
- *sanskar sinchan*  
(nurturing culture)
- *vedokta grihashthashram*  
(the stage of marriage according to the Veda)

Jokhakar is the recipient of many awards and citations for his service to the community. His love for poetry attracted him to become the secretary of *buzme adab* in the Transvaal.

Kshatriya Mahila Mandal of Cape Town has compiled and published a collection of wedding songs '*lagnana geeto*'. Wedding songs which form part of the Gujarati tradition are sung during the various ceremonies (chapter 3) before marriage. The '*geets*' are expressive of '*shringar*', '*karun*' and '*hasya*' *rasa*. (see *rasa* in the introduction of this chapter.)

#### **6.4 CREATIVE LITERATURE**

Although there has been a lack of continuity and high standards in creative literature in the Gujarati community, commendable efforts have been made by enthusiastic writers of poetry and prose. An exasperated writer Jokhakar said "What is the use of writing Gujarati literature in South Africa? who is going to read it?" There has been very little recognition and no incentive for the writers. Only those who still recognise the importance of mother tongue persevere in their effort to encourage the

maintenance of Gujarati. The expression of various *rasas* as mentioned earlier is especially evident in the creative literature even in South Africa.

#### 6.4.1 POETRY

The only poet who has published more than one book of poems is **KANTI B. MEHTA** who writes under the pen name 'ashlesha'. Mehta was born in Amchak, Surat, and came to South Africa at a young age and obtained his secondary education in Johannesburg. He was fortunate to obtain a scholarship for teacher training at J J Training College in Surat. After completing his studies he joined the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya in Johannesburg as a teacher in 1955.

For the minority immigrant Gujarati community of South Africa it has been a struggle to maintain the mother tongue. Amidst such circumstances it is refreshing to find a poet of rare distinction in the Gujarati language. There are very few who can express their inner emotions through poetry. Mehta's publications include the following books:

- *Ankur*  
(a collection of poems of various poets in South Africa- compiled by K Mehta and K Prajapati)
- *ramkatha*  
(written for children)
- *jankar*
- *gujaratna gungan*
- *baharo phool varsavo*  
(a collection of the poet's poems)
- *maheki uthi phool suvas*  
(a collection of the poet's poems)
- *manavtana mul*  
(an unpublished but staged three act play)

Mehta's poems depict a variety of themes. They sing in praise of the beauty in nature. He has enormous faith in nature. The poet also expresses deep emotions of despair, hypocrisy and disappointment in humans. The poet clearly attempts to convey a message to society. He is critical of the injustices prevalent in society based on class and caste. This is mirrored in his presentations. Some of his poems are written in metre and some are free style. His efforts are laudable in a country where Gujarati is gradually obsolescing.

**svarachit kavita**, (self-composed poems), a collection of poems written by **BABARBHAI CHAVADA** was published in 1991 after his death. He was born in 1908 in India and came to Cape Town with his father as a young boy. He was influenced by his family to 'uplift' their caste group. Being educated in the Gujarati language he engaged in the promotion of the mother tongue by actively participating in Cape Town's United Hindu Association. At the age of sixteen in 1924 he wrote and presented a poem, at the Cape Town City Hall, in praise of Sarojini Naidu who was on a visit to South Africa. He was heartily applauded for his effort and this inspired him to write poetry.

Chavda wrote poems in praise of God; description of nature; on old age; inspiration to civil activists; Mahatma Gandhi; Eid-ul-fitr; child marriage; divorce; and remarriage. Through his poems Chavda sought to instill moral values in the community.

**KARSANDAS PRAJAPATI** wrote literature under the pen name *chakradharai* and *kalant*. He was born in India in 1934 and was brought to South Africa in **1936**. His father sent him to be educated in Baroda in the Gujarati medium where he matriculated and also obtained his degree of Bachelor of Teaching (B.T.).

When he returned to South Africa he first taught at the Springs Gujarati school then at the Gandhi Bharat Vidyalaya.

Prajapati has written articles on social topics and composed poetry which was published in most of the local Gujarati annual magazines. Some of his works were also published in Gujarat's popular monthly for children *Ramakadun* and *Gandiv*. He also wrote plays such as *Chalo lagnaman* which was produced in 1958 and *Radiyali raat* which was produced in 1979. He acted in both the plays which toured Durban and Johannesburg and the proceeds of which went to the "Indian Opinion". His poem 'divali avene' claimed third prize in the South African Gujarati poetry competition.

**MUHAMMAD AHMED MEHTAR** who was well known by his pen name 'Farooqi' was born in Surat in 1911. He came to South Africa at the age of nine and later attended the High-Grade Indian School in Durban. Although he was inspired by the Urdu language and has written poetry in Urdu, he originally wrote in his mother tongue Gujarati. Mehtar wrote articles in Gujarati for 'Indian Views' and later Mr. Moosa Meer invited him to become its sub-editor. He was instrumental in the establishment of the 'Buzme Adab', a poetic society, which has branches all over South Africa. At each annual 'kavi sammelan' (mushaira) of the Buzme Adab, Hindu and Muslim Gujarati poets met together and presented their 'new' compositions. The anthology of these poems 'kavyguchha' (a bouquet of flowers) though hand written was published by the society.

Mehtar also published his poems in a collection called 'kavyakunj' in 1981. His poetry express his own experiences and what he observes in life. He expresses joy when 'ekyatana bi' the seed of unity are sown by the getting together of Muslim and Hindu Gujarati

poets. In his (jivan) '*bhar bantu jay chhe*' the poet is disillusioned by the changing values and life seems a burden.

Farooqi Mehtar has won respect in both the Muslim and Hindu communities for his humility in character and love for poetry. He has also been a prolific song writer and over sixty of his songs have been recorded since 1944.

In 1981 he also published a book of poems in Hindi named *rekhaen* in the Devanagari script with the assistance of Prof.R. Sitaram.

There has been many women in the Gujarati community who contributed to literature though they have not been able to publish their works. Nevertheless **VIJYOTIBEN DAYARAM'S** poems have been handwritten and compiled in a mini book form called '*jyoti kavyakunj*'. Vijyotiben has been very active in community activities and has played a leading role in boldly advancing the views of the women. In the same manner she has composed her poems which express her heartfelt desires. Many of the poems are a dedication to God. In a poem '*vandarni vat*' she lashes out at the human kind by portraying the monkey race who remark that 'when we meet we do not ask the caste and creed of our fellow beings, but the humans find it very important to distinguish these differences and having done so sneer at the 'low' ones.

Two sisters from Simonstown in the Cape, **PADMA CHOTUBHAI PATEL AND MANJULA NATVARLAL PATEL** have been active in promoting the Gujarati language among the children. They have written numerous poems and articles for many local and national magazines and have contributed tremendously to Gujarati literature.

Padma Patel wrote a collection of poems for children set in a familiar 'raag' (tune) which have been recited and sung at schools. The poems are educational and aim to make the Gujarati school lessons interesting and exciting. The topics include colours, exercise, mother, alphabet, diwali, Gandhiji, and care of the teeth which have proved to be very popular in teaching the children. Her articles are of a pragmatic nature.

Some of the other learned popular writers and amateurs whose details I have not been able to give are Urmilaben Patel, Mr. Dolat M. Desai, Mr. N.N. Desai, Mr. Govind Parmar, Mrs. Laxmi Patel, Ms. Nirmala Desai, Mr. N.V. Mehta, Mr. A.M. Meer 'Alif', Mr. Y.I. Shekhji, Mrs. Taramati Mehta, Mr. K.C. Naik, Mr. Govind Patel, Mr. D. Bhatt 'Kailash', Mr. S.H. Dhupelia, Mr. E.M. Meer 'Yusuf', Mr. Babubhai Patel and many others.

The above personalities have also made regular contributions to the local Gujarati periodicals such as *prakash*, *yuvak*, *pragati*, *sharda*, *samaj*, *jay gurjari*, *pathik*, *adarsh* and live presentations at *kavi sammelans*.

#### 6.4.2 SHORT STORIES AND DRAMA

An outstanding contribution to prose in Gujarati has been made by **GULABBHAI HARIBHAI PATEL** of Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape. Born in Uitenhage in 1935 he began writing Gujarati articles and literature in 1952. Patel first studied at a local college and obtained his Matriculation Certificate through Union Correspondence College in Johannesburg. He took a keen interest in the politics of the country and contributed many articles in Gujarati to the 'Indian Opinion' in Durban and 'Pratap' in Surat. Many such articles, especially on 'apartheid' were also sent to

other newspapers in Bombay and Surat and as a result the members of the Security Branch raided his premises and confiscated invaluable equipment and written material.

G.B. Patel has written and published the following books:

- *sanskaritane chanyade*  
a social drama published in 1956.
- *koi gora koi kala*  
a collection of essays on 'colour bar' published in 1958
- *yovanni yad*  
a collection of short stories
- *sadhana*  
a second collection of short stories
- *pathik*  
a monthly periodical of literature which included stories, poetry, miscellaneous essays and drama of which he was also an editor.

The above mentioned Periodical *pathik* was first published in April 1964. Patel was the editor and he used to send the material to be printed in India since facilities were lacking in South Africa. After being printed the books were posted from Uitenhage to subscribers. *Pathik* was a high standard periodical comparable to the standard of Gujarat and it became very popular. However, the publication of *pathik* ceased after two years on account of difficulties with regard to printing.

Most of the stories in *pathik* are set in the cities of South Africa. The themes illustrate the lives of the Gujaratis in their traditional settings.



## 6.5 PERIODICALS, MAGAZINES AND SPECIAL EDITIONS OF JUBILEES

The limited scope of Gujarati literature in South Africa has inhibited the development and publication of creative literature. In spite of the negative attitudes expressed, first by the government and then by new generation of Indians (who grew up with less zeal for the maintenance of their mother tongue) towards the Indian Languages in South Africa, the Gujarati community strived to do their best within the limited resources available. Besides the regular occupations the fairly literate persons engaged in cultural activities which also included amateur writing.

The Gujarati community has been receiving periodic publications from Transvaal, Cape and Natal. The writers had the opportunity to freely express their imagination and were also pragmatic in their nature. Newspapers such as 'Indian Opinion' and 'Indian Views' have already been accounted for in the previous chapters. Here I have only listed the most popular that were available. It is likely that I have not been able to trace all the past publications. **All** the following publications have been presented in a systematic style though almost all of them have been handwritten. They include poetry, stories and essays on a variety of topics. Below, are some of the periodic publications:

### 1 PRAKASH

From the year 1944 Prakash was published by the Tarun Bharat Sangh Sanstha of Johannesburg. P. S. Joshi had served as its editor. It was stopped after three years.

## **2 MAHAGUJARAT**

This was a monthly publication from Natal and only survived two years, 1945-1946. Dr. N.P. Desai, a widely read Gujarati scholar and medical practitioner, had been the editor. The main aim of the periodical was to inspire interest (*ruchi*) in literature and language and introduce social reforms.

## **3 YUVAK**

The enthusiastic Gujarati youth of Port Elizabeth in 1950 ventured to compile an annual, Yuvak, to publish literature in Gujarati. The editor was Manilal Ranchod. A very high standard of Gujarati a leaning towards Sanskrit (*sanskrit pradhan*) was used. The annual made a regular appearance from 1950 to 1960. It continues to be published but with a few years of gap in the editions.

## **4 PRAGATI**

This annual was published by the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj and compiled by Gandhi Bharat Vidyalay from 1958 to 1981. Many of its articles are contributions of the teachers and members of the society. The pupils of the school were also encouraged to contribute to the annual. Each edition also carried the annual report of the Gujarati school. The first editor was the scholar Mr. U. Jokhakar and the last one was Mr. M.K. Patel.

## **5 SHARDA**

The Bharat Sharda Mandir (Gujarati School) under the care of Transvaal United Patidar society has been annually publishing 'Sharda' from 1962 to 1979. Mr. U. Jokhakar and Mr. Vinaychandra Patel served as the co-editors. After a lapse it is now published as a Divali

annual. In 1996 it presented its bumper 16th edition to mark the 60th anniversary of the school. Few contributions are made locally but most of the stories and essays are from authors in Gujarat. A teacher explained that since the Gujaratis have little access to books from Gujarat the society complements the locally derived material.

## **6 SAMAJ**

The 'Lahari' family of East London had published their own annual from 1945 to 1952. The family owned a press and the dedication of each generation has contributed to the continuity of service to language and literature.

## **7 ADARSH**

Adarsh Yuvak Mandal a youth group from Johannesburg, has been regularly publishing 'Adarsh' annually from 1977. The editor is the very able writer Mr. Karsandas Prajapati. It has maintained a high standard of content which includes poetry and short stories and other articles written locally. It has been very popular among the Gujarati community.

## **8 CAPE CULTURAL SOCIETY DIVALI ANNUAL**

Following the implementation of the Group Areas Act the Gujarati community of Cape Town was relocated to Rylands, the suburb earmarked for Indians. The original gujarati organisation known as the United Association changed its name to the Cape Hindu Cultural Society since it moved to Rylands. From 1974 the society has regularly published its Divali annual. Fifty percent of the articles are in Gujarati and the other half are in English. It is printed on high quality glossy paper and maintains a professional standard. Hundreds of copies are distributed all over

South Africa. It invites local writers to send contributions to the annual.

## **9 JAY GURJARI**

With the establishment of the Maha Gujarati Parishad in 1975, and the enthusiasm of uniting Gujaratis nationally the monthly periodical 'Jay Gurjari' was initiated. The first editor was Mr. Ramlal Harry from East London who has tirelessly served the community and has been a custodian of the Gujarati language.

## **10 MAHATMA GANDHI SHATABDI SAMITI ANNUAL - special twenty first anniversary issue (1969- 1990)**

This society was established in 1969 which was declared a Gandhian year by the general assembly of the United Nations to commemorate the birth centenary of Mahatma Gandhi. The Samiti organises an annual eisteddfod which has proved very successful. The Samiti on its 21st anniversary published a souvenir brochure. Most of the messages of goodwill are written in Gujarati and more than half the articles published in the book are also written in Gujarati of a high standard.

## **6.6 CONCLUSION**

"Literature" in the minds of most people may be synonymous to poetry and prose but in this research I have tried to include a wide range of writing by the people, whenever an opportunity arose to publish such writing. Most of the writers of Gujarati literature in South Africa may not be acknowledged as literary people in the strictest sense, but given the opportunity they do have the potential to develop their skills. All the modern tendencies and trends in

literature have been assimilated by Gujarati literature. With their efforts at experiencing their concerns about socio-poetical issues, or giving vent to their emotions on various subjects, the personalities described have made invaluable contributions to the Gujarati language in South Africa.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

#### 7.1. INTRODUCTION

Upto 1960 the Gujarati language in South Africa was totally unthreatened by the dominance of the English language which serves as the language of wider communication in the country. (Desai 1992:189) It became an accepted norm to be proficient in the English language for economic and political success. As Kuper (1960) found, "Generally, the 'passenger' Indians came from a higher standard of living in India than the indentured; they wore better apparel, enjoyed a higher degree of vernacular education, and ate better food."

The Gujaratis or passengers who settled in South Africa chose to set up their own community organisations, schools and halls, religious institutions, libraries and small retail shops though a few became wealthy wholesalers and factory owners. The Gujaratis were determined to maintain their ethnic identity in the host country. Besides, efforts were made in response to the political, economic and social circumstances which threatened the survival of this minority group. The Hindus have adhered to caste groupings while the Muslims have a strong affiliation to *gaam* or village. Both these groups also have strong religious affiliations.

Bughwan (1979:473) also found that "for decades, it was quite a phenomenon in the Indian schools that Gujarati-speaking children, usually well schooled in all aspects of the use of their home language, excelled in arithmetic in which they had already achieved a high standard in the Gujarati

medium.....English was only resorted to when it became absolutely imperative, and a strong pride in the preservation of the mother tongue continued to persist in this group for much longer than most others for which necessity dictated the urgency of acquiring English".

In the course of history the Gujaratis became bilingual and multilingual. Linguistic practices changed over a century. People used language to assert different language and cultural identities. The Hindus, Muslims, Parsees and Christians in the Gujarati community were comfortable in conducting a conversation with each other in Gujarati as they perceived themselves as different from the indentured labourers although their common motherland was India.

It emerges that change in language practices became more apparent when the older generation (monolingual Gujaratis) at home began to disappear and the new generation was unable to maintain the use of the mother tongue. A period of stable bilingualism from 1930's has been prevalent in the community. English is replacing Gujarati as the medium of communication at home. In the survey **99.3%** of respondents claimed to speak Gujarati at home and **99.4%** of (same) respondents use English at home.(see Table 5.1) In the school survey (Table 5.3) the children use more English and less Gujarati at home.

## **7.2 MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT**

In the Gujarati speaking community in South Africa **links with the mother country** India were regularly maintained through correspondence and periodic visits. These visits were made to maintain caste and kinship solidarity and to oversee on property issues. The Hindus and the Parsees being in the minority even

within the Gujarati community took their children to India for marriage. They aimed to preserve their caste and regional affiliations. The persistence of caste among the Hindu Gujaratis is stronger than in other Indian linguistic groups. They 'imported' brides from their own caste or village. Mr. A.A.(#35) claims that the Hindus, more than the Muslims, carried out this practice since there were a substantial number of Muslims in this country and therefore did not face difficulties in finding matches for their offspring.

The Gujaratis were most affected by the government's Immigration Amendment Act of 1953 which placed a ban on importing brides from India. For the few Parsee families this Act brought greater difficulties since they strictly adhered to the rule to marry only a Parsee. They were forced to allow their children to emigrate thus further diminishing their numbers. Breaking off links with the mother country definitely affected the maintenance of the language since new brides who were mostly monolingual no more came to South Africa.

The traditional '**joint family**' **system** has contributed significantly to the maintenance of the Gujarati mother tongue. 'Generation' played a positive role in maintaining the ethnic language since it was easily transmitted from one generation to the next in the joint family. The collapse of the joint family, due to factors such as the Group Areas Act, family members moving out of the joint family due to economic success and acculturation, hindered the transmission of the mother tongue. The younger generation had little opportunity to use the Gujarati language at home and even less within the outgroup Indian community. Mesthrie (1992:32) observes that one of the causes of decline of the EMT has been that "none of the five major Indian languages was intelligible within the entire Indian community and none could serve as a



'neutral' lingua franca." In the present survey **88.1%** claimed that the breakdown of the joint family system had contributed to the diminishing of the Gujarati language in the last thirty years.

**Community organisations** and their promotion of the mother tongue through **community school systems** and regular **cultural and religious activities** contributed to the use of the language in varied domains. The importance of **school systems** in the minorities is recorded by Hoffman (1991:43). The decline in Welsh language could be attributed to the fact that the Welsh had to wait until the late 1960's for the establishment of the first Welsh-medium schools. Schooling in the non-mainstream language can assume paramount importance for the survival of a linguistic minority. Hoffman also cites Byram (1986b) who in the study of the German minority in Denmark shows that the existence of the minority depends on its schools.

**Eisteddfods**, which entail competitions in categories such as poetry, short story telling, speech making and drama, are very popular and reinforce the use of the standard language. The eisteddfod movement is a very popular means of linguistic and cultural expression in all the language groups of the Indian community.

The Gujarati community, basically an urban community was particularly affected by the Group Areas Act. In Natal, the relocation of residential areas has split the community into several suburban areas. This deprived the children of mother tongue education in the once centralised schools and the adults of communication in Gujarati with the Gujarati speakers. In the Transvaal the implementation of the Act brought the community together but the old infra-structure was destroyed and the community struggled to rebuild the school system. Major cities of the Cape Province such as East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town faced

similar consequences. **Demographics** did affect the maintenance and the shift of the Gujarati language.

Other social determinants of LMLS such as language loyalty, language attitudes, proficiency, diglossia, functional allocation of domains, mass media, libraries and religion have proved to be supportive of language maintenance. In recent years there has been an overlap of the domains of language use and the most threatened domain appears to be the home where English is rapidly replacing Gujarati.

**Bilingualism** seems to have become the norm in most Gujarati communities in the diaspora. Compare Gujaratis - in East Africa (Lieberson & McCabe 1978: 69-81); in Britain (Dave 1991:88) and (Holmes:1992), in Leicester (Bhatt:1994) and in United States (Sridhar:1992). Most of the research in these communities seems to indicate a shift in the mother tongue. As Holmes (1992:55) questions "What real choice is there for those who speak lesser-used languages in a community where the people in power use a world language such as English?" In South Africa the Gujaratis were faced with an added burden of learning a new official language, Afrikaans. It was not a voluntary choice, it became compulsory in schools and a pass in both English and Afrikaans ensured admission to higher education. Bilingualism so far has been stable but one needs to do further investigation among the younger generation whose degree of proficiency in both the languages could predict a shift to English. Only 5.8% of the younger generation between the ages 21 to 30 has been represented in this survey.

Interesting phenomena related to bilingualism such as Code-mixing and Code-switching, actually display the ability of a person to manage two codes simultaneously with two different sets of ground rules of morphology, semantics and syntax. The choice of code is determined

by its function and situation. Malik (1994:12) cites Gumperz who claims that any code-switched utterance is governed by syntactic and pragmatic constraints. The Gujaratis in South Africa are not only bilingual but also multilingual and therefore besides English one may even hear utterances in Afrikaans or an African language such as Zulu, Venda or Xhosa. Mixing for emphasis like the following sentence is common. "When are you going to the shop? *Hamba, ja, go.*"

Only when an immigrant community has realised its economic and social objectives in the host country and when the younger generation has developed an interest in its religion and culture will there be hope of any **literature** being written in the mother tongue. That is also dependent on whether the community in the long period of 'adjustment' has been able to maintain its language. Although one may find but a small volume of Gujarati literature written in South Africa it is significant since it expresses the experiences in the adopted country. In comparison, hardly any literature is found in the other Indian languages which shows that literacy in Gujarati has been developed. The writers of Gujarati literature have been conscious of the social realities. In this transitional period while showing the sordidness of apartheid and the inconvenience of being marginalised, the writers need to draw a picture of vision and hope in the literature of a new South Africa. The writers should take a cue from Kanti Mehta's '*dakshin afrikani jai ho*' (VIVA SOUTH AFRICA) hailing and ushering in the new nation.

### 7.3 RESURGENCE EFFORTS

For a minority group community cultural organisations (NGO'S) are more important for language maintenance than the government since they play a big role in the maintenance of culture, language and religion. One of

the reasons why the Gujarati language survived was the establishment of Gujarati schools and temples which were always the priorities of the community. Although Mesthrie (1992:32) mentions that the decline of Indian languages has been due to lack of systematic vernacular education this was not the case in the Gujarati language. Despite the poor salaries for teachers, their sense of loyalty to the mother tongue strengthened their commitment to Gujarati education in schools. For a detailed account of the school system see Desai (1992:144-188). If there has been a decline in pupil enrolment in recent years other factors such as the instability in almost every sphere brought about by the transitional period in the country seem to be responsible.

In spite of the difficulties and obstacles facing the community many attempts are continuously made to preserve the ethnic language, culture and religion among the Gujarati community. The following efforts are by no means insignificant.

1 The Gujarati community periodically invites literary and religious scholars to deliver lectures in Gujarati. In June 1997 the most prominent and distinguished Gujarati scholar of the epic Ramayan attracted thousands of people from all over the country to a religious discourse for ten days. There have also been many other scholars in the present decade who visited this country. They are too numerous to mention.

2 In April 1992 the Natal Gujarati Parishad invited a drama group from Bombay which presented three full length Gujarati plays. The group toured all the major cities of South Africa.

Again in June 1997 the Gujarati Mahila Mandal invited another drama group from Gujarat which also presented three plays in all the major centres of South Africa.

The plays attracted full house audiences. From the discussion among the audience it appeared that most people could comprehend the dialogue fairly well. All the people interviewed favoured the regular visits of cultural artists from India.

3 A wide range of cultural activities support the use of Gujarati. Cultural evenings are arranged by various Gujarati societies. The newly formed Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra, an organisation established in 1992, aims to unite all the Gujaratis in Durban under one body to promote culture, Gujarati language and Hindu religion. It has a preset annual programme which includes the celebration of festivals which are well organised by its committee. Most of the programmes are attended by over three thousand people. Gujarati artists are invited from India, Britain and the United States for these programmes.

The Surya Kala Niketan, a youth cultural group arranged a cultural programme in July 1997. It had a cast of 120 and attracted an audience of over a thousand people. The compere of the show conducted his business in the Gujarati language.

4 Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir (S.B.S.M.) Private School was officially opened in Lenasia near Johannesburg on 21st March 1996. The Chairperson made the following statement in the SBSM's 60th anniversary brochure as one of its objectives.

"The school has set high standards and will be leaders in the field of education excellence by:

- Providing English as the main language with Gujarati as a vernacular (second language) and as from next year Zulu will also be taught.

There are no racial or religious restrictions in this school.

Yet another Private Hindu School has been opened by the Hindu community in Laudium, Pretoria. The Indian languages Gujarati and Tamil are taught through the computer system. The Private School is open to all irrespective of race or language.

5 Plans and proposals for the maintenance of the Gujarati language are continually made by active members of the community who are concerned about the attrition of Gujarati. See Appendix F and Appendix G

Although the forces of negative impact are many the community strives to nurture its assets of identity.

6 The Vishwa Gujarati Parishad (World Gujarati Conference Committee) had arranged a students exchange programme for 30 pupils from Transvaal in December 1996. These Gujarati students went on a one month programme to Ahmedabad, India. They spent two weeks with Gujarati 'host' families and two weeks on an educational programme in Gujarat. The pupils were exposed to the Gujarati language and culture in the mother country. Some of the pupils who were interviewed reported that it was a good exercise but they could not learn much in such a short period.

#### **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher is an active member of the Gujarati community. This resulted in her use of the observer-participant technique, which produced the following

recommendations which may benefit the community and other threatened linguistic minorities.

1. If maintenance of the mother tongue is desired it has to be a continuous process. Political and social environments can change rapidly. Therefore the community has to plan strategically so that sudden change will least affect it. The community's language must be one of the several languages that has to be learnt by the children. Bilingualism should be fostered but multilingualism should be the goal.

2 Since 1994, after the first democratic elections, the 24th day of September is celebrated as Heritage Day in South Africa. Heritage includes those aspects of culture, tradition and history that are given value in the present and passed on from one generation to the next. Each of the immigrant groups brought their language, arts, crafts, and religion or dharma - a way of living. The parents should no more be embarrassed about their heritage as in the past, due to eurocentric values which were instilled, and inculcate the heritage values in their children and accord respect to their heritage.

3 Gujarati language has to maintain stability within diversity. Unity in diversity has been the motto of the Hindu religious sects and linguistic groups in South Africa. If Gujarati language has to survive it has to maintain stability consciously or lose its identity in the 'melting pot'.

4 Encourage the parents to read Gujarati and speak the language at home and with their children.

5 Participate in the high level of cultural activities in the community.

6 Parents should be actively involved in the mother tongue education and complement the teaching at Gujarati school.

7 Children attending vernacular schools drop out at an early age by the time they reach standard three or four. The parents must not only encourage but reprimand the children if they do not complete primary education upto standard seven level. Only the full term of primary education will ensure adequate literacy in the language.

8 Training of teachers should be seen as a priority to maintain a good standard of education and to arouse interest in pupils. Unqualified teachers whose only objective is to earn some pocket money have no commitment and therefore will not ensure a positive attitude.

9 Teachers of the Gujarati language will undergo training only if they can expect a reasonable income. The community has to outlay sufficient funds if adequately trained teachers are to be employed in the future.

10 Gujarati schools should continually revise their syllabi to meet the demands of a changing society.

11 A low number of pupils offering Gujarati at state schools has not made it viable for the subject to be taught at state school. Therefore the community schools should be strengthened.

12 Finally, attention is drawn to Reversing Language Shift (RLS) a concept formulated by Joshua Fishman concerning endangered languages projects. Fishman's concern lies with the *in situ* (language threatened on native soil) rather than immigrant languages. Mesthrie (1994/1995:1-19) discusses Fishman's theory and offers



a critique from an Indian South African minority perspective. Among many things he suggests:

- It is not too late to do something about the ongoing language shift; but it will take special and planned efforts and the cooperation of individual families.
- the good work that has involved so much effort and self-sacrifice on the part of many individuals with respect to vernacular classes should be continued. but they should link into efforts to reverse language shift in the home.

## **7.5 CONCLUSION**

Throughout the survey of the sociolinguistic status of Gujarati some features become apparent about the state of the language itself. These are the salient points of the research.

Firstly, the Gujarati community, a minority community, has been conscious of its status and has relied on its own resources to maintain its ethnic identity and language. It has achieved this through its community organisations.

Secondly, acquisition of English has been inevitable for political, economic and social survival in the host country. Proficiency in English thus became a priority.

Thirdly, there is a partial language shift though there is no cause to believe that the language would become obsolete in the near future.

## **SUMMARY**

**CHAPTER I** serves as an introduction to the study and briefly outlines the purpose of the research. The chief focus is on the maintenance and shift of the Gujarati language in South Africa. This is a sociolinguistic research. The issues related to it that are relevant for the study and the theoretical framework are discussed briefly. The aims and objectives and the methodology are clearly defined. Finally the scope of the study is given.

**CHAPTER 2** gives an account of the Socio-historical background of the Gujaratis in South Africa. A short profile of a few Gujaratis who first arrived in South Africa at the end of the nineteenth century is given. The sociolinguistic situation in Gujarat has been described so as to understand the linguistic practices of the Gujarati immigrants, who are also known as *passenger Indians*, in South Africa.

**CHAPTER 3** describes the reciprocal relationship between language and culture. The nature of the community that cradles this language and culture is discussed at length. The topics of discussion include minority status, urbanisation, cultural survival, class and caste, marriage and joint family system. An account of a few of the socio-religio-cultural societies that constitute the Gujarati community is given so as to understand their contribution to the maintenance of the language.

**CHAPTER 4** deals with the main theme of the study viz. Language Maintenance in the minority Gujarati community of South Africa. Political, Economic, Demographic and Social factors that have contributed

to the maintenance and/or shift of the Gujarati language in South Africa have been investigated. The role of formal education in government schools and community-managed schools in the promotion of Gujarati language has been examined.

**CHAPTER 5** describes the Changing Patterns of Language Use in the Gujarati community. The linguistic patterns changed from predominantly monolingual speakers to a bilingual community. Code-mixing and Code-switching techniques related to bilingualism are presented with examples. Very little Language Change has been noted in Gujarati since the standard language still holds respect. The Gujarati speakers are continually in contact with other languages therefore slight change may be noticed on the peripheral surface. Factors that are contributing to Language Shift such as Generation, Changing situation in the Gujarati schools, Acculturation and shift in Domains are examined. The repercussions of the Group Areas Act on language maintenance have been identified.

**CHAPTER 6** gives a brief account of Gujarati Literature in South Africa. The chapter has been divided into sections to distinguish the types of literature that have been available. This includes Political, Religio-cultural and Creative literature. A section on periodicals, magazines and special jubilee editions has also been included.

**CHAPTER 7** constitutes the conclusion of the study. Language Maintenance efforts in the Gujarati community have proved successful thus far but language usage is declining in the younger generation and this already indicates a partial shift. Based on the findings recommendations have been made which may help to stabilise the situation.

**A P P E N D I X   A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TO THE GUJARATI COMMUNITY**

**OF**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

# QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE GUJARATI COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Note: Where appropriate please **CROSS (x)** the box

## A PERSONAL

1 NAME.....

2 ADDRESS .....

3 PROVINCE

KwaZulu-Natal 1	Northern Cape 2	Eastern Cape 3	Western Cape 4
Gauteng 5	Northern Province 6	Mpumalanga 7	North West 8
			Free State 9

4 RELATIONSHIP OF RESPONDENT TO HOUSEHOLD

Husband 1	Wife 2	Other(specify) 3
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5 AGE

21-30 1	31-40 2	41-50 3	51-60 4	61+ 5
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6 SEX

Male 1	Female 2
-----------	-------------

7 MARITAL STATUS

Single 1	Married 2	Divorced 3	Widowed 4
-------------	--------------	---------------	--------------

## 8a CHILDREN

Number	
--------	--

## 8b CHILDREN

1 Males	2 Females
---------	-----------

## 9 PLACE OF BIRTH

South Africa 1	India 2	Other (specify) 3
-------------------	------------	----------------------

## 10 OCCUPATION

Professional	Educational - teacher, lecturer, professor etc	01
	Medical - doctor, surgeon, physiotherapist etc.	02
	Legal - attorney, advocate etc.	03
	Technical - in laboratory, electronic	04
	Engineer - related	05
	Accountant - CA, etc	06
	Other - scientist etc.	07
	Social worker etc.	08
Businessman/Businesswoman - self employed		09
Sales Person - insurance, business etc.		10
Clerical Worker - clerk, bookkeeper		11
Transport and Communication worker e.g.. bus driver, postman, telephone operator, taxi driver, stoker		12
Service, Sport and Recreational Work, eg. chef, waiter, hairdresser, police etc		13
Artisan and Semi Skilled Worker, painter, plumber, motor mechanic, supervisor, foreman		14
Labourer [except farm labourer]		15
Farmers, farm labourer		16
Mining and Quarry Worker		17
Gujarati Teacher in state school, private school		18
Housewife, student		19
Priest		20
Unemployed, seeking employment, unfit for work, retired		21
Other (specify)		22

## 11 RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Hindu 1	Muslim 2	Zoroastrian 3	Christian 4	Other 5
------------	-------------	------------------	----------------	------------

12. EDUCATION  
Immediate family (respondent, spouse, son, daughter) in South Africa  
[cross (x) the **highest** education level obtained/passed]

12.1 English

Family Member	Primary Std. 1-5 1	Secondary Std. 6-10 2	Tertiary 3	Other 4	None 5
Head					
Spouse					
child 1					
child 2					
child 3					
child 4					
child 5					
child 6					
Other					

12.2 Gujarati (community organisation school/state school)

Family Member	Primary Std. 1-5 1	Secondary Std. 6-10 2	Tertiary 3	Other 4	None 5
Head					
Spouse					
child 1					
child 2					
child 3					
child 4					
child 5					
child 6					
Other					

B HERITAGE

- 1 First family member (ancestor) to enter South Africa
- 1.1 Name.....
- 1.2 Relationship to you .....
- 1.3 What was his/her occupation in India?  
[i.e. what did he/she do for a living]  
.....
- 1.4 What was his/her occupation in South Africa?  
[i.e. what did he/she do for a living]  
.....

### 1.5 Period of arrival from India

1900-1920 1	1921-1940 2	1941-1960 3	1961-1980 4	1981-1996 5
----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

### 1.6 Place of origin in India

Surat 1	Kathiawad 2	Charotar 3	Ahamadabad 4	Other[specify] 5
------------	----------------	---------------	-----------------	---------------------

## C STATUS AND USAGE OF LANGUAGE

1 Where did you learn the Gujarati language?

India 1	South Africa 2	Other 3
------------	-------------------	------------

2 How did you learn the Gujarati language?

1	At home - through family
2	Private tuition
3	Formal teaching - Gujarati school
4	Formal teaching - Madressa
5	Formal teaching - State school
6	Other

3 Which of these do you consider as your **mother tongue** today?

Gujarati 1	English 2	Other(specify) 3
---------------	--------------	---------------------

4 Which language/s do you speak?(cross **all** that apply)

Gujarati 1	English 2	Afrikaans 3	Other(specify) 4
---------------	--------------	----------------	---------------------

5 Which language do you **use** most?

Gujarati 1	English 2	Afrikaans 3	Other(specify) 4
---------------	--------------	----------------	---------------------



6 Which language/s do you speak at **home**? (cross **all** that apply)

Gujarati 1	English 2	Afrikaans 3	Other (specify) 4
---------------	--------------	----------------	----------------------

7 How **proficient** are you in the Gujarati language?

	Very well	Fairly well	Not at all
1 Speak			
2. Read			
3 Write			
4 Understand			

8 If married, how **proficient** is/was your spouse in the Gujarati language?

	Very well	Fairly well	Not at all
1 Speak			
2. Read			
3 Write			
4 Understand			

9 How often do you speak to your parents in Gujarati?

n/a 1	all the time 2	often 3	sometimes 4	not at all 5
----------	-------------------	------------	----------------	-----------------

10 If no, state why .....  
.....

11 How often do you communicate with your spouse in Gujarati?

n/a 1	all the time 2	often 3	sometimes 4	not at all 5
----------	-------------------	------------	----------------	-----------------

12 If no, state why .....  
.....

13 How often do you communicate with your children in Gujarati?

n/a 1	all the time 2	often 3	sometimes 4	not at all 5
----------	-------------------	------------	----------------	-----------------

CHILDREN

19 Did your child/children attend Gujarati school?(If not applicable go to question 27)

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

20 If yes, what type of school?

Community school 1	Private school 2	State school 3	Other 4
-----------------------	---------------------	-------------------	------------

21 State **how many** of your children obtained and/or are obtaining formal Gujarati education at

1	Community Gujarati School	
2	Private Gujarati School	
3	State School offering Gujarati	
4	Other Gujarati School	

22 If no, give reasons

1.....  
2.....

23 What is your **oldest** child's present command of the Gujarati language?

	a Very well	b Fairly well	c Not at all
1 Speak			
2 Read			
3 Write			
4 Understand			

24 What is your **youngest** child's present command of the Gujarati language?

	a Very well	b Fairly well	c Not at all
1 Speak			
2 Read			
3 Write			
4 Understand			

25 Why do you send your child/children to Gujarati school?

1	Learn Gujarati language
2	Learn Indian culture
3	Both
4	Other(specify)

26 How was it beneficial for your children to study Gujarati?

1.....

2.....

27 Do you think it is **important** to know Gujarati to preserve

1	Identity	
2	Culture	
3	Religion	

28 Do you think there is **no need** to know Gujarati to preserve

1	Identity	
2	Culture	
3	Religion	

29 Do you have any Gujarati books at home?

Yes	No
1	2

30 If yes, how many

1	Religious Books	
2	Literature Books	
3	Magazines, etc	

31 How often do you read them?

n/a	Everyday	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	6

32 Have you written any articles/books/literature in Gujarati?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

33 Do you listen to Gujarati songs?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

34 If yes, what are the sources?

Radio Lotus 1	Audio/Video tapes 2	Records 3	Films 4	Other 5
------------------	------------------------	--------------	------------	------------

35 Do you interact/communicate with any societies/  
institutions involved in promoting the Gujarati language?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

36 If no, state reason

1. ....
2. ....

37 How are you informed of any cultural, social or religious  
activity in the Gujarati community?

1. ....
2. ....

38 Central Statistics of 1991 show that Gujarati is  
proportionately the **most spoken** Indian language in South  
Africa. How do you think the language was maintained?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

**D. ATTITUDE AND ASPIRATIONS**

1. What is your attitude towards the Gujarati language?

I am proud of it 1	Disinterested 2	I don't care 3
-----------------------	--------------------	-------------------

2 What is your spouse's attitude towards the Gujarati language?

I am proud of it 1	Disinterested 2	I don't care 3
-----------------------	--------------------	-------------------

6 What is your reaction when you hear Gujarati being spoken?

Excited 1	Very Happy 2	Happy 3	Confused 4	Indifferent 5
--------------	-----------------	------------	---------------	------------------

7 What is your reaction when Gujarati is not being spoken by a Gujarati?

Disappointed 1	Excusable 2	Surprised 3	Indifferent 4	None 5
-------------------	----------------	----------------	------------------	-----------

8 What is your reaction when you hear Gujarati being spoken by a Gujarati from India?

I wish I could speak like that	1
It is very sweet to hear/impressive	2
It is of very high standard to understand	3
None	4
N/A	5

9 Do you think it is important to keep Gujarati alive in South Africa?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

10 What should the Gujarati community do to maintain the Gujarati language in South Africa?

10.1 .....

10.2 .....

Gujarati in State Schools

11 Would you encourage your child to study Gujarati as a subject in a state school?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

12 Now that Gujarati is offered in state schools will it result in its retention?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

13 Explain why .....

14 Since Gujarati is offered at state schools is there any need to continue running of community schools who offer Gujarati?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

15 Why?

1.....

2.....

.....

**E FACTORS AFFECTING MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT OF THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**E(a)** Do you think the usage of written and spoken Gujarati has diminished/lessened in the last 30 years?

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

If yes, have the following factors contributed to this?  
[You may choose more than one]

1 Gujarati took second place to English/Afrikaans for the purpose of making a living

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 2 Previously clustered Gujarati speaking community dispersed into the suburbs [due to the Group Areas Act]

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 3 People moved into areas where no Gujarati schools were available

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 4 Marriage outside Gujarati speaking community

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 5 Breakdown of the joint (extended) family system

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 6 Parents not speaking Gujarati at home

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 7 Increased adoption of western ideas and culture

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 8 Prohibition of brides into the country [from 1953]  
[breaking links with mother country]

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

- 9 The small proportion of Gujarati speakers to the total population of South Africa

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

10     Obtaining of higher education and professional qualifications have contributed to making gujarati speakers distant from the Gujarati language

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

11     Religious teaching and discourses in English rather than Gujarati

Yes 1	No 2
----------	---------

**E(b)** Any other factors you feel have contributed to the diminishing of the Gujarati language in South Africa

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....



**A P P E N D I X   B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TO THE GUJARATI SCHOOLS**

**OF**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE GUJARATI SCHOOLS

Note: 1. To be completed by the Principal/Head  
2. Where appropriate please cross the box

1. Name of School

.....  
.....

2. Address

.....  
.....Tele:.....

3. Year when school was established

.....

4. Institution in charge of school.

5.1. Name.....

5.2. Address.....

.....Tele:.....

6. Officials of the Institution

	Name	Address	Phone
Chairperson			
Secretary			
Treasurer			

7. List of Teachers (1996)

Name	Age	M/F	Qualification
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

7. List of Teachers (1996) continued from previous block

Training in Teaching	Experience in teaching (years)
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

8. Number of Pupils (1996)

	Boys	Girls	Total
Class 1			
Class 2			
Standard 1			
Standard 2			
Standard 3			
Standard 4			
Standard 5			
Standard 6			
Standard 7			
Grand Total			

9. Subjects being taught

Gujarati	Hindi	Religion	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4

10. Total monthly running expenditure of the school

R.....

11. Source of funds

Fees	Donation	Govt-grant
1	2	3

If others,specify.....

12. How often are examinations held?

Monthly	Quarterly	Half-Yearly	Yearly
1	2	3	4

13. What other activities are held at the school?

Eisteddfod	Annual Day	Picnic	Others[specify]

14. On which of these festivals is the school closed?  
[You can cross more than one box]

Diwali	Ram Nawmi	Krishna Jayanti	Rakshabandan	New Year
1	2	3	4	5

If other specify .....

15. Total number of pupils/teachers in the last 10 years

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Pupils					
Teachers					
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Pupils					
Teachers					

16. If there is a decrease in the number why is this so?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

17. What interest do the parents show in the school?

.....  
.....  
.....

18. What difficulties are encountered in maintenance of the school? Eg. Lack of funds, Lack of teachers etc..

1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....  
4. ....

19. What steps are taken to motivate the children to study Gujarati?

1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

20. What do you think is the future of Gujarati schools in S.A.?

.....  
.....

Gujarati in State Schools

21. If Gujarati language is offered in state schools, will it result in its revival?

Yes	No
1	2

If no, why .....

22. Should Gujarati education be compulsory for all Gujarati pupils in its revival?

Yes	No
1	2

23. Since Gujarati is offered at state schools ,is there any need to continue running of private schools which offer Gujarati?

Yes	No
1	2

24. Why?

.....  
.....  
[The following questions to be answered by any official in the case where the school has closed down]

25. State the number of pupils and teachers in the year the school closed down

Pupils	Teachers

26. The highest number of pupils and teachers on record when the school existed

Pupils	Teachers

27. State reasons for closing the school

- 1.....  
2.....  
3.....

**A P P E N D I X   C**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TO THE TEACHERS**

**OF THE**

**THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE**

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE TEACHER OF GUJARATI LANGUAGE

1 Highest Gujarati qualification

.....

1.1 Academic Qualification

Institution	Degree/Diploma	Year

2 Other qualifications [eg. music]

.....

3.1 Teaching Experience .....years

3.2

Employer: Previous/ Present	Position held	From	To

3.4 Highest standard taught .....

4 Reasons for teaching Gujarati

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

5 What would be your reasons for giving up teaching Gujarati?

.....



- 6 In your class, state what in your opinion,  
is the degree of interest in learning Gujarati?

keen	moderate	coerced	indifferent

- 7 In your opinion what is the standard of education of  
Gujarati in the schools

high	mediocre	fair	low	don't know
1	2	3	4	5

- 8 Pupils ability to communicate in Gujarati

very good	good	satisfactory	fair	low
1	2	3	4	5

- 9 Do you think the text books from India are suitable  
for South African conditions/environment?

Yes	No
-----	----

- 10 If no, what are your suggestions for changing the  
present condition/situation

1 .....

2 .....

- 11 What interest do the parents show towards the Gujarati  
school?

Keen interest	Some interest	Disinterest	Don't care
1	2	3	4

- 12 What is your opinion about the future of the Gujarati  
schools in South Africa?

Promising	No Future	No Comment	It will depend
1	2	3	4

13.1 Please elaborate what it will depend on

.....  
.....

14 Presently what is your interest in Gujarati literature?

Very good 1	Good 2	Fair 3	Poor 4
----------------	-----------	-----------	-----------

15 Would you like to pursue academic studies at University of Durban - Westville in Gujarati?

Yes	No
-----	----

16 If yes, state reason for not studying Gujarati at the university thusfar

.....  
.....

17 What other training would you find useful in the teaching of Gujarati?

.....  
.....

18 What can be done to keep the Gujarati language alive?

.....  
.....

19 If Gujarati is offered in State schools will it result in keeping the language alive?

Yes	No
-----	----

20 If no why.....  
.....

21 Should Gujarati education be compulsory for all Gujarati pupils in State schools?

Yes	No
-----	----

22 Since Gujarati is offered at State schools is there any need to continue running private Gujarati schools?

Yes	No
-----	----

23 Why?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**A P P E N D I X D**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TO THE GUJARATI INSTITUTIONS**

**OF**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

LOCAL GUJARATI INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS

NOTE: This questionnaire must be filled in by presently active and inactive institutions. Any official or active member of the institution may complete the questionnaire.

1 Name of the Institution

.....

2 Address Telephone

.....

.....

3 Date of establishment.....

4 Established by .....

5 Number of members when established

Male	Female	Total
1	2	3

6 Membership open to:

All	Surtee	Kathiawadi	Particular Caste	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4	5

7 Membership fee/subscription

.....

8 Present officials:

Chairman:..... Telephone:.....

Secretary:..... Telephone:.....

Treasurer:..... Telephone:.....

9 Which language is used to conduct the meetings?

English	Gujarati	both
1	2	3

10 Which language is used to note the minutes of the meetings?

English	Gujarati	both
1	2	3

11 If in Gujarati:

mostly	sometimes	seldom
1	2	3

12 Previously were the minutes noted only in Gujarati?

yes	no
1	2

13 If yes, when did you change to English?

.....

14 Do you conduct any Gujarati school/classes?

yes	no
1	2

15 If yes

1 Number of years conducted .....

2 Number of pupils .....

3 If the school closed down, what were the reasons?

.....

.....

16 What other active role has been played by your institution in the advancement of the Gujarati language?

1 .....

.....

2 .....

.....

3

17 What are the various functions held by your institution

Function	how often	average attendance [number]	language spoken at function

18 In which language are the newsletters/pamphlets sent to the community?

English	Gujarati	both
1	2	3

19 Which other activities does your institution undertake

Social	01
Sports	02
Charities	03
youth club	04
women's club	05
bhajan mandal	06
other-specify	07

20 Any other information about the organisation which is relevant to the promotion of the Gujarati language?

.....  
.....  
.....

**A P P E N D I X E**

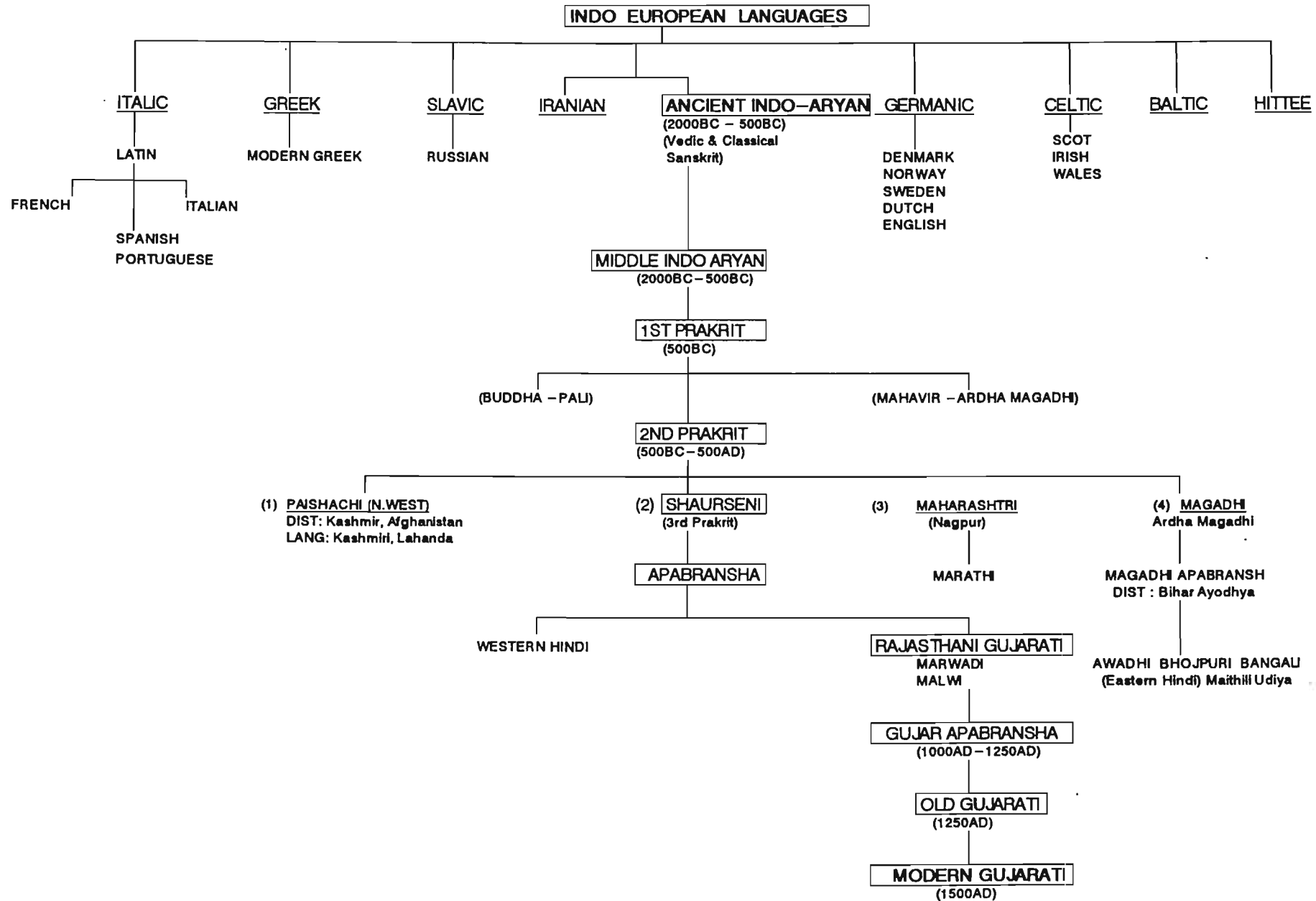
**EVOLUTION**

**OF THE**

**GUJARATI LANGUAGE**



# THE EVOLUTION OF THE GUJARATI LANGUAGE



# **A P P E N D I X F**

## **PROMOTING GUJARATI LANGUAGE**

### **G U J A R A T I A S M I T A**

**PREPARED BY KANTI NAIK AND KANTI MEHTA  
JOHANNESBURG  
13-12-83**

# GUJARATI ASMITA = ગુજરાતી અસ્મિતા

SAMMALAN  
સંમેલન

Blue print  
ચુપ્રિંટ

(a) MAIN DEBATE:  
(અ) મુખ્ય ચર્ચા:

\* Gujarati AS THE  
MOTHER TONGUE IN  
THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION  
(especially for the  
Gujarati - speaking Hindus)  
● દક્ષિણ આફ્રિકામાં આજની  
'પરિસ્થિતિ મુજબ ગુજરાતી ભાષા  
એક માનુભાષા નથીકે

b) MAIN PROBLEMS  
and issues  
OF THE  
DAY:

(અ) મુખ્ય પ્રશ્નો  
અને  
મુદ્દાઓ:

\* THE 'LOSS' OF  
GUJARATI AS A  
MOTHER TONGUE  
● ગુજરાતી માનુભાષાની  
અસ્મિતા જરૂરી થતું  
નુકસાન

\* THE 'LOSS' OF RELIGION  
and CULTURE AS THE  
RESULT OF THE 'LOSS'  
OF THE MOTHER TONGUE  
● માનુભાષાની અસ્મિતા  
જરૂરી થર્મ અને સંસ્કારને  
થતું નુકસાન

(c) GENERAL APPROACH  
TO THE PERCEIVED  
PROBLEM:

(સી) કુદ પ્રશ્નોનું નિરાકરણ

\* HOW TO SAVE and  
PROMOTE the GUJARATI  
LANGUAGE  
● ગુજરાતી ભાષાને કેવી રીતે  
અચાવી વિકાસ સાધી શકાય?

(d) POSSIBLE  
SOLUTIONS:  
(ડી) ઉકલ:

BOOKS પુસ્તકો	EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY શૈક્ષણિક કલાવિજ્ઞાન	TRAINING COLLEGE અભ્યાસ મંદિર	VERNACULAR SCHOOLS - SCHOOL COM- MITTEES AS ADMINISTRATORS સમાજોનીગુજરાતીશાળાના સંચાલકોદ્વારા	ENGLISH(Government)SCHOOLS અંગ્રેજ સરકારી શાળાદ્વારા
------------------	--	-------------------------------------	--	---

(e) POSSIBLE PAPERS TO BE READ:

(ઃ) નિબંધોનું વાંચન તૈયાર કરવાસંબંધી:

Gujarati via the medium of English  
Gujarati Books with corresponding English Texts  
અંગ્રેજી માધ્યમ દ્વારા ગુજરાતી ભાષા  
ગુજરાતી લખાણ સાથે અંગ્રેજી અક્ષરમાળાનો વપરાસ

Revival of Vernacular Schools  
Formulation of syllabuses- standard Wise  
Adult education (evening classes)  
ગુજરાતી શાળાઓનું પુનર્જીવન  
કક્ષાનુસાર પદ્ધતિસર અભ્યાસ કમની રચના  
પુખ્તવયના માટે શિક્ષણ (રાત્રિવર્ગો/ખાસ કરીને ખેડેનો)

1. Gujarati via  
1.1 audio tapes  
1.2 video tapes  
1.3 computer(Graphics)  
1.4 radio - e.g.Radio lotus  
૧. ગુજરાતી ભાષા  
૧.૧ રેડિયો ટેપ્સ દ્વારા  
૧.૨ વિડિયો ટેપ્સ દ્વારા  
૧.૩ કોમ્પ્યુટર (ગ્રાફિક્સ)  
૧.૪ રેડિયો (રેડિયો લોટસ)

1. Training-weekends or at night or during vacations  
૧. શાન રવિ અથવા સાજે અથવા રજાઓમાં વગેરે ચલાવવા

1. Conversation  
2. Debate  
3. Plays  
૧. વાતચીત દ્વારા  
૨. ચર્ચા દ્વારા  
૩. નાટકો દ્વારા

1. Promotion of Gujarati via English Schools  
2. Representation to HOD  
૧. અંગ્રેજી શાળાઓ દ્વારા ગુજરાતી ભાષાનો વિકાસ  
૨. પ્રતિનિધિમંડળ દ્વારા એજ્યુકેશન ખાતાને મળી થતું કરવું

f) POSSIBLE  
SPEAKERS

(ફ) વિષય તૈયાર કરનારા નિબંધો વાંચનારા

U. M. Jokhaker  
Kantibhai Mehta  
ડી. જોખાકર  
કાંતિભાઈ મોદેના

Pandit Harishchandra Arya  
પંડિત હરિ આર્ય  
Pandit Nardev Vedankar  
પંડિત નરદેવ વેદાંકર

Shree Pranlal Lakhani  
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પંડિત હરિ આર્ય

૧૨ કરનાર: કાંતિ નાયક  
૨ કરનાર: કાંતિ મોદેના  
૧૩.૧૨.૮૭

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# **A P P E N D I X   G**

## **LEARN GUJARATI LANGUAGE**

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## LEARN GUJERATI

## ગુજરાતી શીખો !

### Some simple words

### કંઈક સરલ શબ્દો

ના લા	નાળ	Tap	દા મા	દમ	Breath
na la	nal		da ma	dam	
ફા લા	ફાળ	Fruit	મા તા	માત	Opinion
pha la	phal		ma ta	mat	
દા શા	દશ	Ten	રા ગા	રાગ	Nerve
da sha	dash		ra ga	rag	
ઘા રા	ઘર	House	છા તા	છાત	Roof
gha ra	ghar		chha ta	chhat	
હા કા	હક	Right	ના ખા	નાખ	Nail
ha ka	hak		na kha	nakh	

### Words of three letters

### ત્રણ અક્ષરોના શબ્દો

બાલક	Child	ઉનાળો	Summer
baalak		unaalo	
નિશાળ	School	છોકરો	Boy
nishaal		chhokro	
ટોપલી	Basket	તારીખ	Date
Toplee		taareekh	

N.B. Final 'અ' (a) in words is generally omitted in Gujarati as નર nara > nar  
In a word of three letters ending with a vowel other than 'a' the second letter, if it ends in 'a' is pronounced with 'a' silent e.g.

છોકરો chhokaro > chhokro

# **A P P E N D I X   H**

## **SAMPLE OF S A R A L   G U J A R A T I**

**(EASY GUJARATI)  
LANGUAGE CHANGE**

**PREPARED BY RAMLALL HARRY  
EAST LONDON 1980  
(PUBLISHED BY 'ADARSH' )**

સરલ ગુજરાતી. બધાથી વંચાય એવું ગુજરાતી. જેડકી વગરનું ગુજરાતી.

રૂષી મુનીઓની ગપ. કાંધર વોલસની એક વાત  
અુપરથી. - રા.લ.હ.

[શ્રી રામલાલ લ. હરિના નામથી આપણો ગુજરાતી સમાજ અનામત નથી. લેઓ  
દ. આ. ગુજરાતી મહાપરિષદમાં આગવું સ્થાન લોગવો છે. ગુજરાતી ભાષા અને  
તેના વિકાસ માટે તેમના વિચારો મર્યાદા-મુક્ત છે. આ લેખ અને મહા પરિષદ  
નો સંદેશો મોકલતાં લેખણો લખ્યું છે - " આ દેશ માટે આપણે ગુજરાતીનું  
દોરેડા હળવું કરવું જોઈએ એમ કું માણું છું. ને રોતે આપણે નિશાળો માલે છે  
અને એમાં ને લાહુતર આપવામાં આવે છે એ આપણા બાપકો માટે દિલકર-  
અમરકારક નથી એમ હવે કું માનતો થયો છું. લાહુતરમાં "Brock Thorn"  
મેથકથી કામ લેવું જોઈએ, અને વ્યાકરણ લખા જોડેલા અક્ષર વગરની  
ગુજરાતી આપણે અપનાવવી જોઈએ. આ માટે કું બનતો પ્રયાસ કરું છું.  
અને એમાં ઘણી સફળતા મળી છે. પરંતુ આ વાત કું ઘણા આંધાને  
સમજાવી શક્યો છું..... "

એમની વાત અને સંદેશો આ સાથે છાપ્યાં છે. એ વાંચ્યા પછી આપણા  
આગેવાનો, શિક્ષકો અને વાચકો એ વિશે શો અભિપ્રાય દર્શાવે છે, તે  
જો કુંકમાં - જુદાસર જણાવશે તો અમને ઘણા ઉપયોગી થઈ પડશે - સં.]

એ છોકરાની ઉમર પાંચ વરસની હતી તીયારે એની બા ગુજરી  
ગઈ. એને દસ વરસની એક મોટી ખહેન હતી.

બા કા ગઈ? મોટી ખહેન કહેતી: ભગવાનને તા. છોકરો  
સમજતો કે ઘણી વખત કહે છેને: માસીને તા, કાકીને તા,  
પાડોશીને તા, એમ ભગવાન પછા બાનો કોઈક સગો હશે,  
એટલે તેને તા ગઈ હશે.

એક દીવસ પુછીયુ: ભગવાનનું ઘર કા? મોટી ખેનના  
આખમા આસુ આવીયા. પછા ફરજ હતી એટલે વાલથી  
સમજવવા લાગી. ભગવાનનું ઘર ખહુ આધુ. તા એક  
વખત જઈએ એટલે પાધુ ન અવાય, હો ભાચલા!

તો બા પાછી ન આવે? ના, ન આવે. મારાથી એને  
ન ખેવાય? હા, ખેવાયને! તુ સારો હશે તો તને દેખાશે.  
અંધારા આકાશમા એક અમકતો તારો ખતાવી ખેને ગાના  
ભાઈને કહીયુ: એ અખકતો તારો ખેયોને? એ બા છે.  
તાથી તને જુએ છે. તુ સારો અને ડાયો હશે એટલે તુ  
પછા એને ખેઈ શકીશ.

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